

A
PRACTICAL DISCOURSE
OF
G O D ' S
SOVEREIGNTY:

With other Material points,
deriving thence.

Ephes. I. II.

—*Who worketh all things after the Council of
His own Will.*

L O N D O N,

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An Accompt of the Treatise and Publication.

THE General Heads of this Discourse, (with other sound Principles, generally owned by the Churches of Britain) the Author was somewhat Instructed-in from his Childhood; and had heard but little of their contraries, till a few years since, that he fell in acquaintance with some who held the General Point: That, he means, which would make the Grace of God in Christ, to be General and alike to All; suspending the whole success thereof, on the Humane Will; without any peculiar Assistance afforded to Any, but what is given in Common unto Men. Which yet he thinks more rightly term'd General, as having the Generality of Men in Nature, for Abettors of it. Not that he thinks All who hold for it, to be in a Natural state; For, as of Most the Judgement is better than their practise; so, of Some he hopes the practise may be sounder than their Judgement: But so to hold, and practise accordingly, he cannot but judge extremely perilous to the Souls of Men.

Divers occasional conferences he had with those of That way: In all which he found it their drift to Insinuate that Principle: (Not caring much to discourse of any thing else, but still diverting into that channell:) And this, with that Confidence of their own, and contempt of the contrary Judgement; such uncomely Reflections (from some of them) upon their Opponents, and slight regard of the Scriptures brought a-

*An Account of the
gainst them; as in no wise be seem'd a Contending for
the Faith.*

He also found their opinion mostly grounded upon words and phrases of a variable interpretation; Not weighing the Scope of the Text, nor how the sense they gave of it, might accord with those of a contrary Import. It was still their way, to bring Those that were plain and express, to be tryed by those of a doubtful sound: Whereas (indeed) the contrary Course had been more Regular, and likely to find-out the Truth.

Not that any Scripture is doubtful in it self, or would seem so to us; were the scope and context rightly understood: But, the same word being used in divers places to a different purpose; for want of well-observing, or rightly taking the Scope, is easily turn'd from its proper Intendment.

It is true, he found among them a general agreement against our Doctrine of Election: and yet, as much differing among themselves as they do from us: Some holding Election, upon Faith foreseen; Others, That Men are taken into delightful Love when they do actually beleive, and not before; Others of them, That there is no Man Elect'd till he hath Persevered in Believing to the last Moment of his life; And Others agen, That there is no Election at all, of particular persons as such, but of the intire species of Men from Eternity.

This put him upon searching the Scriptures more Setly, touching the Doctrine of Election; Wherein the farther he went, the more he was confirm'd in what he had first receiv'd. And as he went-on, found those other Points of Peculiar Redemption, Effectual Calling,

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Calling, and Final Perseverance, so interwoven with That of Election, and dependent thereon; as very Naturally induced a Discussion of Those also. And as Preparatory thereto, it seemed expedient to preface the whole with the Doctrine of God's Sovereignty: the reasons whereof, with its usefullness, you will find in the Treatise it self. It also lay before him, to observe, What useful Instructions deriv'd from these Doctrines, above Those of the contrary tenor.

Of this Work was oft-times a Stop and Laying-aside, as Resolv'd to proceed no farther: Not so much from the want, as Redundancy, of Matter, which he conceiv'd to be in the Scriptures for it; but found himself too-narrow to make-it-out: Partly also, from the difficulty of bringing his scattered Miscellaneous Notes, to a Consistency. But, by one Impressing Occurrence or Other, it still Reviv'd and went-on afresh; till at length, his Gleanings grew into a shock; which then he bound-up and designed it a Legacy to his Children, To whom onely he thought to commend it.

But, so it was, (in the Providence of God,) That some parts thereof came to the view and hearing of several Antient and Sober Christians, who exprest a very hearty Resentment and Approbation of it; Affectionately wishing it might be printed, for more general use; as That which might help to confirm the Tenure of Those already possess'd of the Truth, but still remain subject to sifting.

One amongst them (who had cast a favourable Aspect on the contrary Point;) professed himself well-satisfied with what he had found in this, touching the Impotency of natural Free-will, tho' assisted with General Grace;

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Grace; Urging also the publishing of it, For that he thought, the plainness thereof might render it more Convincing to some (that were looking another way) than learned Disputes.

Another Consideration (which also had its weight) was laid in the Ballance; viz. The usefulness it might be of, To antidote young Professors (or Probationers in Religion;) who being scarce out of the shell of their Natural Understanding, are pronely Receptive of Notions that spring from a Covenant of Works; which, by means of so familiar a discourse of Nature's weakness, with the Necessity and Invincible efficacy of Divine Grace, they might happily be Armed-against.

Repeated instances prevailed (at length) for a willingness to make it publick; in case it should also obtain Approbation from approved Divines; whose Test and Judgment he would first submit it unto: Retaining (neverthelesse) a deep sense of his manifold insufficiency for such a work; and praying, that his personal weakness and obscurity may not prejudice the Truth.

I shall only add (by the way) a word of Religious education: That tho' it do not confer Grace, yet it may prove (and hath so to many) a good Preservative from evils in practice, and errors in Judgment; which others (who had not that Merciful advantage) have more aptly fell-into. Besides, When God comes to work effectually; Those Notions of sin, of Christ, and of Grace, (of which before, they had but the Form;) have proved of singular use to facilitate the work.

The Lord vouchsafe His presence with it! Amen.

I

A

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE OF Gods Sovereignty.

THis *Great and Fundamental Attribute* I have chose to begin with, as a meet Introduction to the following discourse; It being indeed, the foundation of all; and that which gives Life and Virtue to every Divine Truth: Without the knowledge whereof, (in some measure) and practical yielding thereto, we shall want a principal means of quieting our understandings, touching the Points that follow. I gather the sum of what I intend, into this Proposition; *viz.*

That, Sovereign Power belongs to God.

By [*Sovereign Power*] I understand, that *absolute Dominion*, which the *Great God*, blessed for ever, hath over his Creatures, to *dispose* and *determine* them, as seemeth him good.

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That there is such a Power, and that this Power belongs to God, no other Reason needs be assign'd, but that *He is God, and there is none besides him*: There can be no more, because (1) There can be but one *Infinite*; for such a being fills Heaven and Earth; and so, no place or room for another. (2) There can be but one *Omnipotent*; For, He that is such, hath all others under his feet; Besides, where One can do all, more would be impertinent. (3) There can be but one *Supream*; Supream power may reside in Many; (as in mixt Monarchies and Common-wealths,) but as Law-makers and Supream, they are but One. (4) There can be but one first Cause, from which, all beings else derive their Original; and that is, this blessed *One* we are speaking of, *Of whom, and for whom are all things*, 1 Cor. 8. 6. And if he be the *Author of all*, he needs must have a Sovereign Right and Power to *determine all*; as to their being, so also, to their Order, Efficacy, and End.

It is a Truth so natural, and obvious to Reason it self, that other proof seems as needless, as that the Sun is the fountain of light: Nor shall I suppose, that any who will read this discourse, can so far forget themselves to be Creatures, as to seek a proof of their Creators Sovereignty; The things that are seen, so loudly proclaiming his Eternal power and God-head. But since, with our easy admitting the *Notion*, it is none of the smallest difficulties, to own it in our *practise*, and bear our selves answerably towards him; Since also, so huge a weight is born on the shoulders of this Supream Attribute, and our souls are so highly concern'd in the *interest and influences* of it; it needs must be our duty, and well worthy our time, to look o'r the Instances of it, and to mark and consider them well; as things greatly importing our Instruction; whereby we may know something of the *Greatness* of that God, in whose hands our souls are; as also, of our infinite distance from him, and nothingness to him; and so, with the more humbleness of mind, and self-abasement; as also, with the more Faith, and Creature-like affiance, submit unto him, and bear our selves upon him.

To this end, the Scriptures have inrolled divers *Ensignes* of

of Sovereignty, by which, as by so many footsteps, we are led to the *Absolute Will*, and *Power* of God, as the Cause and Ruler of all.

The *Great Act* of *Sovereignty* was Gods Decree for making the World, and of doing, or permitting to be done what ever should be in it, to the folding of it up. The Heavens and the Earth, and all the hosts of them, as yet had no being: It was at his pleasure, *whether* he would make them or not: And if he would, *what* being he would give them; to *what End*, and *how* that end should be accomplished. And that these were all ascertain'd by the Decree, is evident; For, *known unto God were all his works* (which he would do in time) *from the beginning of the World.* The scheme and substance whereof, (and I hope, without intrusion) may be drawn to this effect: That the *Great God* being infinitely good and blessed in himself; was also infinitely prompt and well-pleased to *Communicate* of that his blessedness: To which end, he designed to raise up Creatures, Angels and Men: That for the manifestation of his *Sovereignty*; He would confirm a certain number of those Angels in their primitive state, leaving the rest to themselves: Who falling from that state, should be cast down, and reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. That in this lower World, he would set up the first Man to be the head and Representative of all that should come of him. That this single person should be created in the Image of God, fit to enjoy Communion with him, and endued with power to abide therein. That to manifest the weakness of Creatures, and their perpetual dependence upon God; he would thus leave him to his first stock: and being so left, the fallen Angel tempting him to disobedience, and also prevailing; both himself, and all his posterity by this Revolt, should fall under the curse. That for the declaration of his *Sovereign Grace*, He would (and accordingly did) choose a certain number of *Adam's* posterity, and ordain them to eternal life: And to make known the power of his *wraith* and his just displeasure against sin, he would leave the Rest in that state of perdition they would

Acts 15. 18.

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bring themselves into : That of these Vessels of wrath, Satan himself (whom they chose to follow) should be the Head and Ruler ; as also, over them that were *Elected*, for a time ; viz. until the Messiah, (their true and proper Head , and into whom he had chosen them) should rescue them out of his power. That to this end, (and that he might also be known to be *just* , as well as *Merciful* in justifying of them) the Son of God should take on him the place of a second *Adam*, and come into the world with an humane body ; In which he should fulfill all Righteousness, and by the infinite virtue and merit of his death, should satisfy the Law in all its demands ; destroy the Devil ; dissolve his works ; and Reconcile the *Elect* unto God : That he should be raised again from the dead , and invested with all power befitting the Captain of their Salvation : and so , might effectually minister to them whatever should be requisite for bringing those his Sons to glory. This I take to be the sum of God's Decree ; the *Great Ensign* or *Standard Royal of Sovereignty* ; whereof all the other *Ensigns* are *Effects* or *consequents* , and *subordinate* thereto.

1. The first *visible* Ensign of *Sovereignty* was *Creation*, or, God's giving the World an *actual existence* , in time, according to his *Decree from everlasting* ; Bringing that huge (yet void and formless) *Mass*, at first, out of *Nothing* ; and then this glorious fabrick out of that *Confusion* : His hanging the Earth upon nothing : His assigning to every sort of Creatures, such Form and Station , Order, Use and Efficacy ; and impressing on them, such Laws and Instincts of nature, as seemed him good ; which also was effected by his word : what he would, was *done* with that *immediate* suddenness, as if the things themselves had proceeded with his *breath*. The instant production of light : The waters separating from the other Elements, and gathering into a body ; and their going up and down to the place He had sounded for them ; with many others (of which ye have an Index in the first of *Genesis*) are witnesses of it : as also, His *fixing* this ' *Stablishment*, that *they continue this day according to his Ordinance*, Ps. 119. 91. Con-

Job 26. 7.

Pf. 33. 9.

Gen. 1. 3.

Ps. 9.

Pf. 104. 3.

Consequent to this, as a second Ensign of *Sovereignty*, is that *universal Providence*, by which the Creation is *sustained*, and all inferiour Causes guided to their designed *End*; and this, notwithstanding all supposeable accidents, which might possibly come between, to obstruct or divert them: And that the *Creatures* have, at times, *deviated* from their first Rule and settlement, is no *derogation* to the Doctrine of Gods *Sovereignty*; but rather an *illustration* of it; as shewing, that the *Creatures* are still in *His* hand, as Clay in the *Potters*. Hence we find their innate propensions to be sometimes *suspended*; Otherwhiles acted *beyond*; and at times again, quite *contrary* to, the law of their nature: and this, not casually, nor by the *force* of created powers, nor yet for any *private* or *self-concern*; but to serve some *special* and *superiour* End, which their Lord had to be done: To instance a few; And

1. Of *Creatures without life*: As, the windows of Heaven opening, and the fountains of the great deep breaking up, (Notwithstanding the *Firmament* above, and the bounds beneath,) to drown the world of ungodly men, *Gen. 1. 6, 7. Ps. 104. 9.*
Exod. 14. 21. 22.
Josh. 10. 13.
Judg. 5. 20.
2 K. 10. 11.
 7. 11, and 12. The Red Sea's dividing and standing up as a wall, to make way for his Peop's escape: The Sun and Moon's standing still, till they were avenged on their Enemies: The Stars, to the same end, fighting against *Sisera*: The Suns going back in *Abaz* his Dial, to help *Hezekiab's* Faith: The fiery Furnace devouring those, at a distance, who cast in those holy Confessors; and not so much as touching them that were cast into it: The winds and the Seas, (which are such turbulent and lawless *Creatures*) they stir not, nor breathe, but to fulfill his word, *Pf. 148. 4. Mark 4. 39.*

2. Of living *Creatures*, that have not the use of Reason: How readily went they by pairs into *Noah's* Ark, at Gods appointment! The Frogs, Lice, Locusts, &c. with what supernatural boldness did they assault and perplex the *Egyptians*! That the Magicians themselves confessed, the finger of God was in it: and as strangely withdrew, when their work was done. Witnessed also, by the dumb *Ass's* reproving the

Gen. 7. 8, 9.

Exod. 8. v. 13.

31.
Num. 21. 29.

2 Pet. 2. 16.

1 K. 13. 24. Prophets madneſs : The Lion's killing the ſeduced Prophet, for breaking God's command ; yet not eating the carcaſs, nor tearing his Aſs. A Ravenous bird bringing *Elijah* food in his ſolitary condition. The Whales receiving *Jonah*, and at Gods command, caſting him on dry Land, without harm: *Jonah* 1. 17. with *ch.* 2. 10. And the Lyons not hurting *Daniel* in their Den; yet greedily devouring his accuſers. It muſt needs be a Sovereign power, which thus Intends, Reſtrains, Inverts, the courſe of nature, at his will.

3. Thirdly, Another Enſign aſſerting Gods ſupremacy, and Rightful Dominion, is the general Vote and ſubſcription of Men, eſpecially, the moſt knowing, and ſuch as beſt underſtood him : They own it, (1) In their Practice or Actions; *Abel* offers the firſtlings of his Flock to God: *Gen.* 4. 3, *Abraham* leaves his native Country, at Gods command, to go he knew not whether : He alſo offers his only and innocent ſon *Iſaac*, in whoſe life and poſterity all Nations were to be bleſſed. *Job*, when ſtript of all, falls down and worſhips, *Job* 1. 21. When his two ſons were deſtroyed by fire from Heaven, *Aaron* held his peace : *Eli*, when that tingling ſentence was denounced againſt his houſe ; *It is the Lord* (ſays he) *let him do as ſeemeth him good*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 18. *David*, when driven from Gods Sanctuary, and his throne uſurp'd by *Absolom*, Behold here I am let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him, 2. *Sam.* 15. 26. The men of *Nineveh*, their deſtruction was pronounced peremptorily ; of which they had no promiſe of Remiſſion ; and conſequently, no viſible ground of hope; yet they believed God, faſted, lay in ſackcloth, and turned from their evil way, *Jonah* 3. 5. (2) They likewiſe own it in their confeſſions and atteſtations : *Melchizedeck* ſtiles him, The Moſt High God, Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth, *Gen.* 14. 19. and *Abraham* doth the like, verſe 22. *Job* profeſſeth, that though he were Righteous, yet if God will contend with him, he will not answer, but make ſupplication to his Judge, *Job* 9. 15. The Lord hath made all things for himſelf, *Prov.* 16. 4. For his pleaſure they are and were created, *Rev.* 4. 11. We are the Clay and thou our Potter, *Iſa.* 64. 8. He worketh all things after the Council of his own Will, *Eph.*

Eph. 1. 11. He giveth not account of any of his matters, Job 33. 13. In his hand is the soul of every living thing, chap. 12. 6. He is the God of the spirits of all flesh, Numb. 16. 22. All Nations before him, are less than Nothing and Vanity, Isa 40. 17. He stills the tumult of the people, Ps 65. 7. If it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, Acts 5. 39. The Councel of the Lord, that shall stand, Pro. 19. 21. The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord, Pro. 16. 33. The Kingdome is the Lords, and he is Governor among the Nations, Ps 22. 28. Thou Lord art exalted above all Gods, Ps 97. 9. Nebuchadnezzar, that proud and potent Monarch, whose greatness reached unto Heaven, and his dominion to the end of the Earth, All Nations trembled before him, whom he would, he slew; and whom he would, he kept alive; who said in his heart I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God: I will be like the most high: And who is that God, that shall deliver out of my hand? Yet even he, this Child of pride, is made to confess One higher than himself, and to bow before him; proclaiming to the World, That the most High doth according to his will, in the Army of Heaven and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou? Dan. 4. 22. ch. 5. 19. ch. 3. 15. ch. 4. 34, 35, and 37, verses, and Isa. 14. 13, 14. It might farther be instanced in Cain, Pharaoh, Baalam, and other wicked men; how they were forced (against their wills) to acknowledge the Sovereignty of God; as appears by comparing Exod. 5. 2. with ch. 9. 27, 28. and Numb. 22. 18. Darius also, in Dan. 5. 26, 27, 28.

Ps 33 11.

Fourthly, Another evidence or witness, we have from the Angels, who are great in power: Notwithstanding which, they do perfectly own and submit to the Sovereignty of God. Where Subjects are numerous, wise, and magnanimous; and withall, perfectly submit to the will of their Lord; it argues, their Lord is an absolute Sovereign: And such are the Angels. 1. The Elect or Good Angels: These shew it by their ready submission to any service He is pleased to appoint them: They are Gods Intelligencers: Not that he needs

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Zach. 6. 5. 6. 7.

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their advises, but to manifest his Sovereign greatness : They are also his *Messengers*, He sends them on His errands, to negotiate His affairs among men, and to reveal His purposes concerning this lower world ; as appears by many Scriptures. They are His *Chariots*, Ps. 68. 17. His *Reapers*, Mat. 13. 39, 49. The *Executioners* of His Judgments, 2. Sam. 24. 16 2 K. 19. 35. and Christs attendants at His coming, *Math.* 25. 31 The Apostate Angels, or wicked spirits : though the testimony we have from them, is not from love or good will, yet is it as great an evidence of Gods Sovereignty, as any other ; in that, being enemies to God, proud, and imperious, they are yet *over-awed*, and constrained to submit : we find them subject to His rebukes, *Zech.* 3. 2. And hence it was, that the Devil answerd not again, when that dreadful sentence was pronounced upon him for seducing our first Parents : we have him also presenting himself before the Lord, to give account of his actions ; and touch *Joh.* or any thing he had, he durst not, without leave from God ; nor vary a jot from the rule prescribed him. In the Evangelists are many instances of Christs commanding them forth *with authority* ; yea, a whole legion at once, *Luke.* 8. 30. 32, 33. Nor could they so much as enter into the Swine, without his leave, *Mark* 5. 12. And, which is more, they were subject to the *Apostles*, who had but a *delegated*, or second-hand power committed to them, *Luke.* 10. 17.

Joh. 2. 1, 6.

5. Fifthly, we have the Lord himself asserting His Sovereign Prerogative. In how lofty a stile, and with what Imperial authority, doth He utter himself to Pharaoh! *And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew my power on thee: Exod.* 9. 16. The Apostle quotes the place to prove, that God may raise up men, and appoint them to what use and service he will, *Rom.* 9. 17. *Who hath made the seeing or the blind, have not I the Lord?* *Exod.* 4. 11. *I kill and I make alive: Deut.* 32. 39. *I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy: Exod.* 33. 19. *I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God: and who as I, shall call and shall declare it, and set it in order before me: since I appointed the*

the ancient people, and the things that are coming and shall come? Isa. 44. 6, 7. My Council shall stand, I will do all my pleasure, ch. 46. 10. ch. 40. 12. to the end. My word shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it, Isa. 55. 11. And if the Prophet be deceived, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet, and I will destroy him, Ezek. 14. 9. A remarkable story to the same purpose, we have in the 1. Kings, 22. touching the lying spirit, and the effectual Commission he had from God, to perswade, and also to prevail. How should we tremble before God, at the hearing of such a word! But yet, I do not reckon the last two as acts of pure Sovereignty; but rather, as punishing one sin, by leaving to another: *Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God; Nor liked to retain Him in their knowledge, God gave them over to a Reprobate mind* Rom: 1. 21 & 28. (Notwithstanding which) there is an impression of Sovereignty; in that he deals not so with all who are alike obnoxious to it.

Sixthly, Another Ensign is form'd of those several Acts and Instances, which cannot be derived (at least, so properly and immediately) from any other Attribute, as that of Sovereignty: I shall instance a few; viz. The putting of Man's everlasting condition, upon his eating or Not-eating the fruit of such a Tree, Gen. 2. 16, 17. In not destroying Adam presently upon his disobedience; And in the free promise of a Saviour, *unsought unto* for it, Gen. 3. 15. In protecting Cain, when he had forfeited his life to Justice, Gen. 4. 15. In Preserving Ham from the deluge, though as wicked as those that perished, ch. 7. 13 & 16. In ordering the blessing to Jacob, who sought it unduly; and denying it to Esau, who sought it diligently, and to whom it belong'd of natural Right, Gen: 27. 19, 34, 38. In the sudden turning of Esau's heart to love Jacob, whom he had inveterately hated; and came with full purpose, to destroy him: yet, in a trice, his heart is melted, he weeps on his Neck, and offers himself and soldiers to be his Convoy, Gen. 27. 41, with chap. 32. 6. and ch. 33. 4, 12. In causing a fear to fall on the Amorites, that they did

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not pursue Jacob, when highly provoked by his Sons cruelty on the Men of Sechem, Gen. 35. 5 In sending to Sibon a message of peace, when He had determin'd to cut him off; and to that end, had *hardened his spirit*, and *made him obstinate*, D. ut. 2. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. In causing those nations to destroy one another, who came leagued to destroy His people, 2 Chron. 20. 1, 22, 23 verses. In destroying Esau's mount Irreparably, and for ever; when as Israel, whose land also was full of sin, shall not be forsaken, Obad. ver. 9, 16, 18, 21. and Mal. 1. 4. Especially, considering, that these were the several effects of His loving the One, and hating the other, and that before they had done either good or evil, v. 2, 3. and Rom. 9. 11, 13. In sending Ezekiel to a rebellious house that would not hear; and not sending him to them that would, Ezek. 3. 6, 7. ch. 12. 2 and 3. In hiding the Mysteries of His kingdom from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to Babes, Math. 11. 25. And speaking in parables to the Multitude, lest they should be converted.

In punishing (sometimes) for lesser trespasses, and that severely, and in his own; whiles winking at those of a greater magnitude in other men: Moses is excluded Canaan for a hasty word, though smartly provoked; when Jonah's but mildly reproved for passionately expostulating. Uzzah dies for but touching the Ark, when the Philistines bore it away in triumph. Hezekiah but shews the Ambassadors from Babylon, his house and treasures; and for this, his sons and all must go into captivity. Not that any sin is little in it self, or punished beyond the demerit of it: but, the Lord is pleased thus to doe, partly to shew his displeasure against sin; and that He will not bear with it, even in those that are dearest to Him: but partly also (if not chiefly, in such like cases) to set forth His Sovereign Greatness, and the uncontrollable nature of His matters. The 73 Psalm is full to the same purpose. That also of Job, and the manner of God's dealings with him, is much to be remark'd: He had lived a very strict and holy life, (Not a Man like Job, in all the earth; the Lord himself seems to glory in him) unto which, all outward blessings were promised, and freedom from such sufferings; and when bereft

of

Math. 11. 21.
Acts 16. 6, 7.
Mark 4. 11, 12.
Luke 8. 10.

1 Sam. 5. 1.
1 Chr. 13. 9, 10.
2 K. 10. 13, 17.

Job. 33. 18.

Job. 1. 8.

of all, held fast his integrity, yet the Lord goes on to afflict him, Job 1.3. and leaves him wholly (saving his life) in Satan's power. Had he been a wicked Man, (as his friends objected) those sufferings had evidenced the Justice of God; but now, His Sovereignty: which also seems to be intended by that speech of God to Satan, (ch. 2.3) *Thou movedst Me against him, to destroy him without a cause.*

Seventhly, There are yet other footsteps of Sovereignty, by which that high and holy Attribute is farther illustrated to us; As (namely) *the Lord's constant over-ruling the Designs and Actions of Men, to bring His own counsels to pass; albeit, improper in their own nature; yea, disservient thereto; and sometimes contriv'd on purpose to prevent them:* The project of building the Tower of Babel, was to keep that rebellious Rout together; but it turn'd to their utter dispersion. Laban dealt hardly with Jacob, thereby to keep him low, and to serve himself of him; but God takes occasion hence, to give him Laban's substance; and that by Laban's consent and agreement. Gen. 29.27. and ch. 30. 27, 43. To obviate Joseph's dreams, his brethren sell him into Egypt; and by this means, the Lord keeps them all alive, and accomplisheth that honour to Joseph, which they secretly intended to prevent. Pharaoh layes insupportable burdens on the People, to diminish them; and the Lord Multiplier them under it; *The more they were oppressed, the faster they grew.* Exod. 1. 12. Jacob's dissimulation and palpable abuse of his father's infirmity, was made a means of obtaining his blessing, though contrary to his father's intendment. *Moses*, a keeper of Sheep, a Man slow of speech, and one that had no mind to the work; shall be God's Ambassadour to Pharaoh, (the proudest and most inflexible Monarch upon earth) and bring Israel out of bondage. And who shall be His Commander in chief, to deliver His People from their potent oppressors? but *Deborah*, a Woman; At another time, Gideon, whose family was poor in Manasseh, and he the least in his father's house: And though he had a numerous and powerfull enemy to deal with, and (one would think) had need of all the hands he could make, to fight them; yet, his Army of

7.

Gen. 11.4 & 8

Gen. 37.9, 18.

Ch. 39. 20

Ch. 41. 40.

Ch. 42. 6.

Ch. 50. 10.

Gen. 27.

Exod. 3. 1, 10.

Ch. 4. 10, & 13

Judg. 4.4.

Ch. 6. 15.

Two and thirty thousand, must be reduced to *Three hundred Men*; and they to have no other Arms, but *trumpets and Lumps in their pitchers*: and by *these* He delivers them from that huge hoite. And much like this, was *Shamgar's* killing Six hundred Men with an Ox-goad; and *Sampson* a Thousand, with the jaw-bone of an Ass. It may further be traced, in His producing *contrary effects* by the *same* cause; and then again, the same effect by *causes contrary*. So *Daniel* had a fairer countenance with pulse and water, than those who eat of the King's own provision, *Dan. 1. 15*. In causing the wrath of Man to turn to His praise; which in the nature and tendency of it, is to destroy them that praise him. By His catching the wife in their own craftiness; and causing them to fall by their own devices; Plungeing them in their own ditch. *1 Kings. 22. 27, 28, 30, 34. ver* The persecution of the Saints at *Jerusalem*, was designed to suppress the doctrine of Christ; which yet was thereby *dispersed* into many Countreys, and caused to *grow mightily*: so, The *Pracacher's imprisonment* proved to the *furberance* of the Gospel. And since the Scriptures were finished, humane stories and our own observation, doe abundantly stand for the Matter in hand: Doe but consider how it prevailed, to the dethroning of Satan, and turning the World upside down; and this by means the weakest and most unlikely (to Reason) that could be pitch'd upon: Not the Sword and Spear, the Bowe and Battell-axe; the barded Horse, and the Martial Heroes of the Earth; but by the bare word of God: And this, not by the hand of the *learned, Scribes and Pharisees, Lawyers, Doctors, Poets, Phil sophers*; but by poor *illiterate Fishermen, Carpenters, Publicans, Tent-makers*: And who shall be the subjects and party Militant of this never-to-be-conquered kingdom? Not the *Wise and Prudent, Mighty and Noble*; but *Babes, the poor, weak, base, despised, and things that are not*; and by these He confounds the things that are. And by what Arms? *Patience and faith in the blood of the Lamb.*

Consider

Consider also, the *constant persecution* of the Church, and that by Men of *all sorts*, especially, Those of *greatest power and policy*; the *barbarous devastations* that have been made upon it; and with what *implacable enmity* the World is edged against it; and that yet it *stands invincible*, and is still *gaining ground*; ye cannot but acknowledge, the evident foot-steps of *Sovereign Power*; That the *Most High* bear-eth *Rule over all*; and as for the *Councils of the wise*, He *turneth them backward*, Isa. 46. 25. Dan. 4. 25, 26.

Eightly, An *special Ray* of this *glorious Power*, shines forth in God's *actual predominating* the *Spirits* of Men; as at first, in *choosing*; so now, in *Calling* and *Converting* whom He will. One would think that a *Rational being* should better discern his own interest; and out of choice, comply with the will of his *Maker*, as who must needs best know, what is best for His Creature; and who, in Reason, can have no other design upon him, but his own good. But, we find it otherwise; the best things degenerated turn the worst, and are hardliest reduc'd: Of all Creatures, Man fallen, doth most avert, impugn, and resist, when God would turn him out of his natural course; Notwithstanding, that the forest of evils do attend his present state; and all desirable happiness would apparently follow his change. Yet, so wedded he is to his Lulls, and head-strong in his own Will; that none of these things move him: But On he goes, and On he will; yea, though an incensed Angel, with a drawn sword, should withstand him. To crush them to *nothing*, or break them in *pieces*, were easily effected; a little of Divine Power would do that: But, to *humble* a *proud* and *lofty Spirit*; To *soften* and *melt* an *obdurate heart*; To *tame*, *meek*, and *reconcile*, a *Sanguinary Rebel*; To change the very *inwards* of One *habituated in Sin* and *enmity* against God, and make him *plyable* to *Divine impressions*; This highly proclaims the *exceeding Greatness* of His Power; 'tis a glorious *Trophee* of *Divine Sovereignty*: Which also is farther conspicuous, in *Maintaining* the work begun; and bearing it on through all oppositions: For, there needs the same Power to preserve the new Creation, as at first to

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raise it: The way of God, being altogether upwards and supernaturall, there's a great pronenesse in creatures to Revolt from it; (like a Rolling Stone on the steep of a hill) The Remains of old nature, would torrent-like bear down *all*, if Sovereign Power did not barr up the One, and sustain the Other. For a *spark* of *Divine nature* to live in the brest, of a *lapsed* Creature, is as *great* a miracle and as high an effect of *Sovereign Power*, as all the Instances before enumerated, and More.

Lastly, The Sovereignty of God, is most glorious and adorable, in Ordaining *His own son*, who was *holy*, *harmless*, *undefiled*, and *seperate from sinners*, and was also United to the *Second Person*, to be the Mediator, and to make His soul an offering for sin: And then, in His Eternal disposing of Mens everlasting condition. To *shew*, or *not* to shew, Mercy unto Men equally dignified (or rather, Indignified) in themselves; To make, of the *same* lump, one Vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; is the highest act and demonstration of Sovereign power concerning Men: Which thing, when ever we hear of, or think upon; we should put our mouths in the dust.

Before I come to the Inferences, I would add a Caution or two, to prevent those sinister deductions, which our deceitfull hearts may be apt to draw from this Sovereign Truth:

Cauti^{on}. I.

First, See that you make not God the Author of sin, by charging His sacred Decrees with Men's Miscarriages; as if they were the *Cause* or *Occasion* of them; which we are sure they are *not*, nor *can* be; any more than the Sun is the cause of darkness. Be it alwaies remembred, That the Lord's Rejecting of Men puts *nothing* of evil into them; Nor necessitates the will; It only leaves them to their *own* wayes, which they freely choose: yet *Banking* them in and *stopping* them up, as He did the Fountains of the *Great Deep*; lest they *Deluge* the World with sin.

Secondly, Go not about to *palliate*, Nor think to extenuate your sin, by Arguments fetcht from those Decrees:

That

That sin of the Jews in Crucifying Christ, was in no wise, lessened; because *the Council of God had determin'd the thing to be done*: For, they perpetrated it with *wicked hands*. Nor is any Man's Unbelief e'r the less *culpable*, from God's *Eternal disposement* of Mens conditions; For, it is not upon *that* consideration, that they stumble at the Word, or turn the deaf ear to it; or resist it: but from their own natural blindness and enmity against it.

And so I come to the Inferences: And

First, From the Scriptures so *copiously* holding it forth, *Infer. 1.*
I infer, That the Doctrine of God's Sovereignty is a very *teaching* Doctrine, and full of instruction; and consequently, that it is both a *Duty*, and much for our *Profit*, to be well acquainted with it: And great confidence I have, That the farther ye go in an *umble fiducial* disquisition, and contemplation of it; the clearer will be the *Reason* thereof; and the *more* usefulness will still appear to be in it. Let Reason but keep its own place; (that is, let it work by the Rules of *Right Reason*) and nothing will be more consonant thereto, than that *the Most High should bear rule over all, and Do according to his Will*; and that *Men*, who are *Atoms of Clay* animated by *his breath*; should own Him for their *Sovereign Lord*, and accordingly submit to Him; yea, though so it were, that our own *personal* welfare were not concerned in it: It will be of *singular Use* and Moment to us, in the whole of our lives: Nothing, like this, will allay those carnal Reasonings, which are so unreasonably prone to put in their *Verdict* of spiritual things; (which yet, *Carnal Reason* hath no cognisance of) and will (indeed) be silenced by nothing else: The Apostle, therefore, in Rom. 9. thinks them not worthy a further Reply, whose *captious Enquiries* the *Sovereignty* of God will not satisfy. *ver. 19, 20, 21.*

A second Inference, which naturally flows from this *Infer. 2.*
Doctrine, is that of the Psalmist: *Ob, come, let us Worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.* Let us give Him the glory of this great Attribute, by a *Real and Practical* Owning that *indispensible* bond of obedience which it layes upon every Creature: We are highly obliged by it, *both*

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both in point of subjection, and in point of faith.

1. In point of *subjection*, to His *Laws, Ordinances, Provisions*

First, For the *Laws* of God, and His *Appointments*: These we are to *attend, observe, obey*; I cannot say, *For the Lord hath need of them*; (For, neither can our *Righteousness* profit Him; nor our *wickedness* impair Him; *He that is Wise, is wise for himself*) but do it because the Lord hath commanded; *He is the Lord thy God and worship thou Him*. This is that strong Reason by which He hath backed both *Com-*
mands and *Prohibitions*: *I am the Lord thy God*: Thou shalt doe thus: And thus thou shalt not doe; *I am the Lord*: This he sets in the front of All; and with this He closeth the *Recre*, and Guards them on every side. *Moses* brings it in as a convincing Reason, why we should love God with our whole heart, and keep his *Commandments*, (namely) because he is the *Lord*, and He *onely*: *Deut. 6. 4.* No One, therefore, may pretend to a right of giving *Laws* to Men, or to an interest in their love and obedience; save with respect to God, and the authority they have from Him.

And though He is sometimes pleased, (and it is a great condescension in the great God) by arguments taken from *our own Good*, to draw us to obedience: (*Do it, for it is your life*:) yet, in our spirits, *That* of His *Sovereignty* and *Glory*, ought to have the preference. To cast out *Ishmael*, was a thing grievous to *Abraham*; but being Commanded of God, he *debates it Not*, Nor *delays* to do it. Therefore, hold on your way, though never so great *Obscurity* be upon it at present: Minde your duty in the midst of discouragements: Do, as *Peters* who, though he had labour'd all night and caught Nothings; yet, Master, *At thy command I will let down the Net again*.

2 Be subject to His *Ordinances*: If He please to Command the using such Meanes, as have no Natural virtue towards such an effect, (as in *Moses* stretching his hand over the Sea; and smiting the Rock with his Rod: so, Water in baptism, Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper) Pre-
 sume

same not to say, *What is there in these?* Godlikeness is a Mystery, which onely faith can understand : There is no Divine Institution, but hath Meat in it that you know not of ; which , if rightly used , will speak for it self. If He please to make Clay of Dust and spittle ; Contemn it not ; but submit to His Will and way ; and be thankfull for thy Cure. *Sampsons* hair was an Ordinance to him ; which when he slighted, the spirit of God left him ; and he became as other Men ; and recovered not his strength until it was grown again.

*Judges 12. c.
with Ch. 16. 19*

2. As touching the *Providences* of God ; Observe them and Submit to them : look not upon them as *Empty* things : The *least* may yield you Instruction ; as also, the *Most unlikely* : Out of the *Ester* comes forth Meat, and out of the *strong, sweetness* : Though the thing be a *Kiddle* to an heart uncircumcised ; Plough with *His Heifer*, and ye shall find it.

Neither look on them as Things *Impertinent* ; But say, rather, Is there not a Cause, though I see it not ? The Lord does nothing in vain.

Neither yet look on them as Things *Contingent* : A Sparrow falls not without His will ; and the hairs of your head are all Numbred : David was Dumb , and opened not his Mouth ; why ? *Because Thou Lord didst it* ; And Shimei's Curling he beares patiently, on the same account ; *It may be the Lord hath bidden him*.

Math. 10. 29. 30

Ps 39. 9.

2 Sam. 16. 10.

There may be Such a Mixture and Confusion of things, and your expectation to delayed and frustrated, That your forward untamed heart may be ready to Wrangle it out ; *Why falls it alike to All ? Why to the Just, according to the Work of the wicked, and to the wicked according to the work of the Righteous ? Or, why One event to them All ?* This is not to Enquire wisely : you should rather conclude, and say, (as the Disciples, in another Case) *The Lord hath need of them* : That is, He hath occasion to use such a Providence, to fulfill a Word. If ye would Cast so, as to lye by your Mark, this Attribute of Sovereignty gives you the best Ground. Search and Observe as much as ye will, so you take Faith along with you ; Without which

Eccles. 8. 14.

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ye can do Nothing *Unnecessarily*. Faith is a Sworn Officer to the Great king, and has a key for every lock that is fit to be opened; It forces Nothing; but where it cannot Enter, it stands without, and Waits a fitter season. Let Faith also be Chief Speaker in all your Debates: And then, the Result will be, That Carnal Reason, and Present Sense, (though very Tenacious and Stubborn) shall yield the Cause, and let you goe.

The Summ of all, is this, That though ye be not Conscience to your self, of any particular Cause or Mifcarriage, besides what is Common to Men, (which was the Case with Job) Lay your hand upon your Mouth, as Job did; *The Most High doth according to His Will*: This, even the proudest of Kings acknowledged, when his understanding returned to him; and so do you: And know, That if your spirit be out of frame in your present Condition; it would not be better in any other.

Secondly, Our Faith also is highly concerned in the Sovereignty of God: For, It both obligeth to Believe in Him, and also affords Matter for Faith to work upon. To these Ends, the Lord holds it forth to Abraham Once and Again: *I am God Almighty &c.* This was it, enabled him to believe he should have a Son; even whilst the Deadness of his own Body, and of Sarah's Womb, wrought strongly against it. This also was that made him so readily assent to the offering up of this Son, when he had him. He had as much to say against it, as could well be supposed; For, the Promise was, That in Isaac all families of the Earth should be blessed: which Promise and this Command, Abraham's Reason could not Reconcile: The Contradiction would surely have Run him down, had not his faith in this Great Attribute, held fast and guided the Reignes; Suggesting to him, That He who gave Isaac a being from a Withered Stock, was able also to raise him from the dead. Abraham there fore disputes it Not; Stands not so much as to consider upon't: but up he gets him Early, to do it: And hence he obtained that honourable title, to be called, *The friend of God.*

Ye have seen Now, what Abraham did; Go ye, and do like-

Gen. 4. 34. 35.

Gen. 17. 1.

Rom. 4. 19.

Heb. 11. 19.

Jamer. 2. 23.

likewise : Take hold of Gods Sovereignty as *your own* ; and to be improved for *your good* : *Faith* gives a *Propriety* in any Attribute it looks upon ; and draws out the virtues and Influence thereof, for it self. And therefore, What ever difficulties are in your way ; be not disheartened by them ; but call in this Sovereignty of God, by faith ; to your help : Remember the ready subjection which all Creatures do pay to his Word ; By which alone (without Creatures service) He can level the Mountains, and make Crooked things straight, Restrain, Alter, Invert, and Turn upside down, the very Course of Nature : so that *That* which is death in it self, shall be life to you. New Cords and Wyths, when touch'd by his word, are as flax and tow, when touch'd by the fire ; Iron shall be as straw, and brass as rotten wood : Therefore, *lengthen* the Cords, and *strengthen* the stakes of your faith : you cannot beleive for greater things or better than God can do for you : Even sin it self, which is the Great (and in truth, the onely) evil ; It is His enemy as much as yours ; And you may be sure, He would not have suffered its being in the World, if He had not a Power to Correct and Curb it ; yea, and to destroy it too, at His pleasure. Take hold of His sovereign strength, and your work is done.

But here also a Caution or two, may be seasonably added.

1. That if death in the pot have once been healed, and your borrowed Ax-head, (sunk once past hope of Recovery) have been brought again to your hand, look that Remissness grow not upon it : Beware, ye gather not Wilde Gourds a second time ; Nor presume to throw the helve after the Head : The Divine Power is too great a thing to be trifled with ; or Made to serve with the follies of Men.

2. That you never look on this Great Attribute of Sovereignty, without your *Mediator* ; As without whom it would be matter of Terror and Amazement to sinners : *It is He onely* can render It *Propitious* to you. As Nothing is pleasing to God, but in and through Christ ; So, Nothing in God, is Comfortable to Men, or for their Eternal Good, but as it comes to them *through Him* : As Waters out of

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the Sea immediately, are not potable, unless they be first exhaled by the Sun; or pass through some vein of Earth, which makes them Congruous to our Nature.

I shall mention two particulars, of Nearest Concernment to us; wherein we are, in a special manner, to have respect unto the Sovereignty of God.

1. As touching your own Condition, (*your everlasting Condition*) Submit to *Mercy*, to *Sovereign Mercy*: that is, yeild your self to God without Capitulating or Making terms with him: Those *Syrians* well understood the Meaning of this; They put Ropes on their heads, and themselves in the Conquerors hands, upon an *uncertain* Conjecture, (*Peradventure they will save us a live:*) So do ye, although ye have but a [*Maybe*] *we shall be bid*. Minde your Duty, and leave the issue to God: Believe *above* hope, and *against* hope: Follow God in the dark, as your father *Abraham* did, Not knowing whether He would lead him: Thus to do, is *To give Glory to God*. Therefore *Fear the Lord*; and *Obeys the voice of His Servant*, even then, *when ye are in Darkness*, and have *noe light*, (Namely, of His special Favour and love, to you in particular.) And though never so great discouragements are afore you, from the Guilt of sins Committed the power of Indwelling Corruption; and your present Averseness to Beleiving; and hear withall, That *Faith* is the *Great Commandment*: let your heart answer, Is it my Duty, (my *Duty*) to believe? Nay, *then I must*. Remember His *Greatness*; His *absolute Dominion*; The *uncontrollable*ness of His Matters; That He *hath concluded All in unbelief*; That He *might have mercy* upon All: (that is, That the Salvation of Those who shall be saved might *appear* to be of *Mercy*, and be so *acknowledged*) To him, therefore Commit your Cause, and Commit it to Him as your *Sovereign Lord*; and so leave it with Him; And see, that you take it not out of His hand again, by your doubting the issue of it: And know that *then* is your Soul nearest to Peace and settle ment, When brought to this Submission: *Be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live*.

But, let not the Word be misconstrued: I do not mean by

1 K. 20. 31.

Zeph, 2. 3.

Rom. 11. 32.

Heb 12. 9.

by [*Submission*] That you should be satisfied under a *denial* of Mercy, on the account of God's *Absolute Dominion*: I cannot think *That* a Necessary term or qualification, in your treating with God for Salvation: For

1. I do not find, That God requires such a *Submission*, as the Condition of obtaining Mercy; Nor that He hath made any Promise to give such a *Submission*, in order to that end; Nor any Instance in scripture of Mens having or endeavouring such a frame of spirit, in that business; Nor yet, That Men are any where tax'd for Not attaining to it. They are blamed indeed, and that worthily, For not submitting to the Righteousness of God; (that is, For not Renouncing their own, and flying to That of Christ:) And this blameworthiness you cannot escape, if finding your self lost and undone, you will not presently run to Christ, without first finding in your self Something that may seem to commend you to him.

2. Such a *Submission* seems Repugnant to God's revealed Will: For, if this be the Will of God, even our sanctification, That we should believe in His Son, and love Him with our whole heart; Then it cannot be his Will, That we should be willing to Remain in an unsanctified estate, in unbelief and enmity against Him; which are the inseparable Conjunx of Willingness to be Separated from God.

3. Because the promise of Ease and Rest, is made to the Weary and Laden, coming to Christ; Not to a Contentedness to be divided from him. And the promise of Satisfaction, is to your *hungering and thirsting* after Righteousness; Not to the Cessation of your desire, without the Thing which onely can satisfy.

4. Because, To be satisfied without obtaining Mercy, is to be satisfied with an utter incapacity to Glorify the Grace of God, and to enjoy Communion with Him; which are the principal End and Duty of Men.

5. It is Crosse to the Genius and Concreated Principle of the Reasonable Creature; which is, to seek its own happiness; In any thing short of which, it ought not to acquiesce.

6. Such a *submission* cannot be Requisite in Preparatory

work; because, That would suppose the highest pitch of Grace attain'd (if yet it be a Grace, and attainable) before you believe; and consequently, That it is not a Grace out of Christ's fullness; for ye are supposed to have it before ye go to Him.

And therefore, when I say, ye must submit without Capitulating or making terms; my meaning is, ye are not to Treat upon terms of your own Making; Nor propound any thing to God, but What Sovereign Mercy propounds to you, as the Way and Means of obtaining your Great End: And great Reason ye have for this Submission; for herein lies your Interest; Those being (in truth) the onely Terms, by which a lost and sinfull Creature can be rendred salvable, or capable of being saved: (as may further appear in the Sequel of this discourse.)

I think (with humble Submission) That if any Point of time may be supposed before the Decree, It was *Then* that *Absolute Dominion* bore sway: But, ever since *Election* came in, It is *Grace* that Reignes: Not, That *Sovereignty* is *Ceased*, but *Transferred*: Before, it was in *Power* but *Now* in *Grace*: In *Grace*, as touching the *Elect*; and in *Justice*, as touching the *Rest*. *Grace* is the Attribute God delights to honour; And all the *Others*, are (if I may so speak) Subjects of *This*: Even *Christ Himself* was made a *Servant*, to perform the pleasure of His *Grace*.

So then, *Thou* you are to Submit unto, is the good pleasure of God's will, as held forth in the Covenant of Grace; undertaking for, and perfectly able to save you; and as having His *Sovereign Power* engaged to make it good: Which seems the scope of that passage in Moses his prayer for the people, when they had highly provoked God; *Let the power of my Lord be Great, according as Thou hast spoken &c.* It was to pardon, and still Own them for His people. And to this agree all those Scriptures which hold forth the Power of God; as the ground of Faith; as that by which He is Able to pardon sin, To subdue iniquity, and to hold your Souls in life: you are therefore directed; If ye will have peace with God, to take hold of His strength: Which cannot be meant of

a Contentedness

Numb. 14, 17,
18, 19.

Isa. 27. 5.

Contentedness in having that strength put forth to deliver; but as being perfectly *Able* and engaged by His *Covenant* to *Save* you. As to the time When He will manifest His love to you; As also touching the manner and measure of His dispensing it; the good pleasure of God's Will is expressly and with all quietness of spirit, to be Submitted unto. But as to the Thing it self, You ought not to be said *Nay*: but as he who had power with God and prevail'd; *He wept* and made supplication, but still resolv'd, *I will not let thee go except thou bless me.*

Hos. 12. 14.
Gen. 32. 26.

2. As for the other nearest Concernment, touching your *Children*, deal in like manner for them, by submitting them to the same Mercy. It is true, That next to your own personal salvation, there cannot be a greater evidence of God's love to you, than to Choose your Children after you: Nor any thing more desirable to you: Therefore Command them, and Instruct them, *to keep the way of the Lord*; That He may bring on them the blessing you most desire for them: But be not Over-solicitous and cast down, because you see not yet, the Marks of Election upon them: The Lord doth not (indeed) bind himself to take *all* Believers Children; Nor doth He limit Himself from taking any others: There is Nothing declared touching His Purpose to Take *all* the One, lest they should from thence take occasion to be Remiss in their Duty; (which, till Conversion, is very natural to us) nor doth He exclude the Children of others; For, that might discourage and weaken their hands to that is good. In His various dispensing of His everlasting love; He is pleased to love His liberty and sovereign Privilege, That he greatly manifests His love to Believers, in so frequent a Choosing of their Seed: And the Friends of His Grace, in Not-rejecting altogether, the Seed of Others.

Gen. 18. 19.

Inference 3:

Thirdly, How happy and sovereignly blessed are Those who have an Interest in this Great and Sovereign Lord! Which Every One is blessed with, that has, in truth, taken

hold of His Covenant: For, *That* takes in *all* between the Two Eternities, and Eternity it self withall: And the spirits or strength of the Whole, lies in those few (but very Compendious) Words, *I will be your God.* When the Lord would comfort His People to purpose, and put on their Eagles wings, What a glorious Narrative doth he make of His Power and Sovereign Greatness! in Isa. 40. from v. 12. to v. 26. And then tells them That all this is *Theirs*, v. 27. [And if God be yours, All things are yours: Who and where is he, that can supplant you of His blessing? you may rejoyce in His Highness, the thoughts whereof are Matter of terror to other Men: After the rehearal of all the happiness and Glory that Men or Angels are capable of, it shall all be comprised in this, as the Original thereof, and summ of the whole, *Blessed are they whose God the Lord is!*]

Psa. 144. 15.

Inference 4.

Fourthly, We may see here, the Reason Why God doth sometimes defer to Answer the Doubts and Querie's we stick at, and must desire to be Resolv'd about: It is not only to *shew* His Sovereignty: But to bring our hearts to a submiss and *practical* acknowledgment of it. *Moses* was very unwilling to go on his Message to *Pharaoh*: Many pretences he had to put it by; when as the danger he might be in for killing the Egyptian, was the bottom-Objection; (though he speaks it not Out.) Indeed, the men who fought his life, were now dead: Which, if the Lord had told him of, as first, all those excuses had probably been spared: But He was pleased to conceal it from him, until He had brought him to a full compliance with His Will; and then reveals it to Him Unask'd. So likewise, He would not take off His hand from *Job*, until He had well learn'd him this lesson. Say not therefore, (because you hear not from God so soon as you would.) *The Lord hath forsaken me, My Lord hath forgotten Me*: But follow that good Resolution recorded in *Isaiab*. *I will wait upon the Lord, who hideth his face* (for the present) *from the House of Jacob, and I will look for Him*, v. 17.

Exod. 3. 11.

with

Ch. 4. 10, 13, 19

Job. 42. 2, 6, 7.

Isa. 49. 14.

Inse-

Inference 5.

Fifthly, Let no Man, then, who will Say, *The Lord, He is God*, presume to intrench on His Sacred Royalty, by seeking a Reason of His Decrees, beyond or besides the Good pleasure of His Will : Even Sovereigns of *dust*, will not admit it in Subjects, though of the same Mould with themselves. It is an Imperial Secret, *The Chief of the ways of God* : It belongs to himself alone to know it : and the knowledg thereof would not profit us *Now*. Besides, There is enough revealed, of great importance to us, at *present* ; On which to imploy the utmost of our time and strength. By Over-grasping we may sprain our hands, and unfit them for service which lies within their Compass ; But we gain Nothing. Therefore, go not about to fathom this *Great Deep* : Who, but one of shallow understanding, would think to measure the Sea by handfulls ? or to give a Demonstrative Reason of its various and convertible Courses ? Remember That you *Magnifie His Work* ; but *lessen it Not* by pretending to *Comprehend it*. *Sanctifie the Lord in your heart, and fear before Him !*. Job. 36. 24.
Eccles. 8. 17.

Inference 6:

Sixthly, This gives a Reason, why Men of the largest Capacity, for Learning and Natural understanding, are so mightily Puzzelled and Labyrinth'd in Spiritual Matters; particularly The Doctrine of Election: Why they do so strongly oppose it, and are so hardly Reconcil'd with it : They are not, in truth, subdued to the Doctrine of God's *Sovereignty* : And therefore, whiles in discussing those points of Faith ; they judge as their Natural Optick represents them ; they lose both themselves and the Truth : Which yet, (in some degree) is made known unto Babes, (Men of low stature to them) whose spirits the Lord hath subdued, to rest contented with what their Father is pleased to tell them ; And for the Rest, (as, namely, the Manner and Reason of God's

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Disposements

Disposements and Dispensations) they live by Faith in His Righteousness; Waiting for the day that shall Reveal all things; when the Tabernacle of God, which yet is in Heaven, shall be let down among Men, (or They taken up into it) and these hidden things of Sovereignty, shall be more openly known amongst them.

Inference 7.

Lastly, This Doctrine of God's *Absolute* Dominion, Clears away all that Made-ground and Rubbish, which the Principles of Free-Will-Grace, do found their Election upon; and shews us the only true and Proper foundation of Scripture Election; with those other Important Truths which hold upon it; or are Consequents of it: All which, have their Head in the Sovereignty of God; and Derived thence, as Rivers are from the Sea; As through his blessing and Grace, may appear afterwards. And so I shall close up this first particular, with that holy Rapture of the Psalmist, *Be thou Exalted, Lord, in thy own strength, so will we sing, and praise thy Power. The Lord hath prepared His Throne in the Heavens, and His Kingdom ruleth over all! Bless the Lord, ye His Angels that Excel in strength. Bless the Lord, all ye His Hosts; ye Ministers of His that do His pleasure! Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of his Dominion! Bless the Lord o my Soul!*

OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD.

HAVING founded this Discourse on the *Sovereignty* of God, as the best and most natural ground of Satisfaction (or captivation) to Reason, touching *Ele- tion*: So now, as a means to qualifie our Spirits, and Reconcile them with the Doctrine of *Sovereignty*; it seemeth expedient to annex that of His *Righteousness*: and, I think, there is not a more evident Proposition, than

That there is no Unrighteousness with God. Prop.

This, as we are indispensably bound to believe; So, to be well grounded in the faith of it, will be of exceeding great Usefulness to us, in every Condition; especially under those darker Administrations, which we do not see the Cause and Reason of: When Matters of great Import, seem to be Confused, or Neglected: When all things in view, fall out a-like to All; and you cannot know either Good or Evil, by all that is afore you: I shall therefore Collect *some* of those Considerations, from which you may find light and influence in the dark and cloudy day; and by which (as a Means) I my self was drawn in and guided to this Determination; before I had searched the Scriptures, expressly, concerning this Subject: And they may serve, both as *Arguments* to Demonstrate the Proposition; and as *Antidotes* against those poysonous *Contradictions*, which carnal Reason and unbelief, will be too often forging and flinging in upon us. And

The First is founded on that Infinite Blessedness which *Arg. 1.* the Most High God was possessed of in Himself, before the World or any Creature was made. He did not make them for any *Need* He had of them, but for His *Pleasure*: And *Rev. 4. 11.* if He needed them not, there could be no *Need* or *Reason* Why He should make them *such*, Or to *such* an End, as not to be *Meetly* Over-ruled, and their End *attained*, without

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doing wrong to any. The Motives by which Men are induced and swayed to do Wrong, are chiefly Two :

1. To attain something they have not ; Ahab slew Naboth for his vineyard ; 1 Kings 21. And Athaliah all the seed Royal, to get the Throne ; 2 Kings 11. Or,

2. To Secure What they have : Pharaoh oppressed the People, lest growing Mighty, they should shake off his yoke, and get them out of his Service, Exodus 1. 10. Jeroboam set up his Calves, to keep the people at home, and firm to himself, 1 K. 12. 27, 28. And the Jews, they put Christ to death, lest the Romans should come, and take away their Place and Nation ; John 11. 48.

These two have shar'd the parentage of all the Oppression and Wrong-doing that have been in the World : Neither of which is Compatible with our Great and Blessed God : For all things are His already ; He possesseth the Heavens and the Earth, and all the hosts of them, with an Absolute Power and Right to dispose them ; And what can be added to That which is Infinite ? And as for Securing what He hath, Of whom should he be afraid ? For (1.) There is no God Besides him ; The Lord Himself who needs must know it, if there were Another, professeth Solemnly, That He knows not any. And (2.) As for Creatures, They are all more absolutely under His subjection, than the smallest dust under our feet is to us : The Nations are to Him less than nothing and vanity. He need not so much as Touch them, to bring them down : 'tis but Gathering to himself, His spirit, and His breath, and they perish together : Let the Lord but With-hold His sustaining Influence, and they fall of themselves : But He remains the same to all generations.

Arg. II. Secondly, Consider the Infinite perfection of His Nature, Holy, Holy, Holy ! Isa. 6. 3. i. e. Perfectly Holy : He is Glorious in Holiness, Exod. 15. 11. Now, In Holiness is not the least tincture of its Contrary : God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. He is Good, and doth Good, Ps. 119. Is Righteous, and doth Righteousness ; All His works praise Him : The Righteous Lord will do no iniquity. It is an high demonstration of His Excellency, That He cannot deny Himself

Isa. 44. 6.

verse 8.

Ch 45. 17.

Job, 34. 14, 15.

Arg. II.

1 John 3. 5.

Job. 3. 7.

2 Tim. 2. 13.

self; that is, He cannot do any thing, that is in the least degree, contrary to His Holy Nature: Nothing that needs to be Retracted, or to alter His mind about it : His *Will* is the Rule of Righteousness ; and Righteousness, the Rule of His Will : The Saints of old, were perfectly of this mind ; *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right?* And the Apostle *Gen 18.25.* Puts it as a Question not to be answered, That if God were *Rom. 3.6.* Unrighteous, How then shall He Judge the World ?

Thirdly, Consider Further, The constant Rule and Measure of God's Dispensments ; which is not done *Fortuitously*, nor *Rashly* ; but with *Deliberation* and *Exactness* ; He *Lays Judgment to the Rule*, and *Righteousness to the Plummer* : He will not punish without a Cause, nor more than is deserved : Touching the sins of *Sodom* : *I will go down* (says God) *and see whether they have done [altogether] according to the Cry of it.* *Renders to every one [according] to their Deeds*, *Rom. 2.6.* and *Gives them a [just] recompense of Reward*. *Heb. 2.2.* *He will not Cast away the perfect Man*, Nor *help the wicked*. *Job 8.20.* *Eliphaz* puts the question with great confidence (as well he might) *Who ever perished being Innocent?* His Righteousness is such, that it even holds his hands until the Innocent be out of danger. The Angels were straitly commanded, Not to begin the execution of God's wrath on the wicked world, until His Servants were Marked out : And when the Lord came, to destroy *Sodom* ; He hastens Righteous Lot to *Zoar*, with this onely Argument, *I cannot do any thing until thou become thi her.* *Rev 7.3.* *Gen 19.22.*

Fourthly, It is further evidenced, by the Lawes He hath given unto Men ; The sum of which is, To do Righteously ; And the End of them, the good and welfare of the Creature. After a thousand years experience of These, compared with the issue of Mens Inventions, They are acknowledged to be Right Judgments, Good statutes, and lawes of Truth : What an admirable Catalogue have we in *Rom. 12.1.*

(1) Off such as concern our duty towards Himself immediately, this is the Sum, *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and Him onely shall thou serve* : There is Nothing more equal and just, than to Worship and serve Him Whose

we

we are ; To love and live to Him from whom we have our life and breath.

(2) Such as refer more immediately to Our selves ; As Temperance, Chastity, Moderation, Sobriety, &c. These (as is evident to all) do greatly conduce to our outward welfare, both in point of health, estate, Posterity, &c. (And what evil Consequents do attend the Contraries of those Virtues, might be every day's observation :) More especially, such as relate to our spiritual state and Welfare ; of which, more particularly, under the Next Argument.

(3) Such Commands also, as respect our duty towards Men ; As to do *justly* ; To shew *Mercy* ; To follow *peace* with all Men ; Every One to Mind his *own* business ; And not intermeddle with Others : so, To be subject to the Powers that be ; and To pray for those in authority ; (The Neglect of which duty, may be a Cause of our disquietment from them ; at least, it may prove an eclipse of our Joyfulness in suffering under them, &c.) The Sum of this kind of Duties we have in that Standing Uncontrollable Rule, Of *Doing to Others, as we would they should do unto us.*

On the Contrary, there is Nothing forbidden, but what tends to our hurt : As, if it were needful, might be Demonstrated by Instances Innumerable.

To this also, might be added, the strict Injunctions that God hath laid upon the Subordinate Dispensers of His Law ; as (namely) *To Judge the People with Just Judgment ; Not to Wrest Judgment, Nor respect persons : yea, He Curseth them that pervert Judgment, And will surely Reprove them that accept persons, &c. And shall Mortal Man be more just than God ? Will He under such penalties Command Men to do thus, and not do so Himself ?*

Deut. 16. 18, 19.

Deut. 27. 19.

Job 13. 10.

Ch. 4. 17.

Arg. V.

Fifthly, Another Beam of the Righteousness of God shines forth in His putting the Matter of our Duty into such a Way and Method, as renders it *most Facile*, and is *most conducive* to our Chief End : *As 1 To Remember our Creator in the days of our youth :* For, the Work of Conversion and Turning to God ; must needs be much easier *Then*, than when *habituated* in an evil course : For, Long impenitency (besides the

the provocation it is to God) estranges the Mind more from Him; Makes the Spirit more Inflexible, and harder to be wrought upon; It Multiplies our Work, and Subtracts our strength: For One accustomed in evil, to learn to do well; and for a Blackmoor to change his skin, are things of a like possibility: It's a very Rare and Difficult thing for a Man to be born again, when he is Old.

2. To Watch against, and suppress the *first motions* of sin; and to avoid what ever might be an *Occasion*, or have Tendency towards it: and in order thereto, To *take heed* Mal. 2 15. to our Spirit; To *keep the heart with all diligence*; To *ab-* Pro. 4. 23. *stain from all appearance of evil*; to hate the garment spotted by the flesh; and to make a Covenant with our eyes, as Job. Jud. v. 23. did: (For, the professed practise of some Saints, is *Dir-* Job 31. 1. *ective* to Others, and Equivalent to a Command.) To keep an Enemy from Rising, is much easier than to Quell him being up; yea, To Nip sin when 'tis young, is the ready way, Not only to *keep it low*, but to *kill it*; as the continual plucking off Buds from a Tree or Plant, destroys the Root.

3. Not to do any thing, the lawfulness whercof is *dubious* Ro. 14. 23. to us; Which, as it is a sin in it self; so it tends to obscure to us the true sight of things; and emboldens to farther attempts. So also, Not to Mind only the *Lawfulness* of things, but their *Expediency*, The not-heeding of which, proves often an occasion of sin to Others, whereof we cannot be Guiltless: So likewise, to Cherish all Motions to Good; Not to quench the Spirit; and to hearken (or listen diligently) what the Lord God will speak: Who oft times delivers His Mind with a *Still* and a *small* voice; which doubly obligeth our Attention. Exod. 15. 26. 1 K. 19. 12.

4. In His pressing with so much weight and Necessity, those great Duties of Faith, Love, Patience, Self-denial, &c. (1) *Faith*, which consists in Submitting to the Righteousness of God; Taking hold of His strength; and Following the conduct of His Wisdom: And in order thereto, shewing us our own sinfulness, weakness, and folly; with the vanity of all Created Bottoms, which have always failed at the greatest need; and so, drawing our hearts to lean on Himself, In whom alone we have Righteousness and strength.

(2) Love

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(2) *Love*; This is a powerfull, Active, Candid, and Obliging Principle; *It bears all things; Thinks no evil; Takes all in good part; Makes That both portable and pleasant,* which without Love would be both harsh and burdensom.

Judges 8. 3.

(3) *Patience, and Meekness of Spirit*: These mitigate the Dolour of any suffering; and often prevent or allay the storm that is rising: *A soft Answer turns away wrath, Prov. 15. 1.*

It also breeds Experience; 1. That any affliction may be born, through Him that strengthens: 2. That afflictions are all for our profit: 3. That we could not well have been without them: 4. It also gives to understand the Lords meaning in them, which the Noise of tumultuating passions would drown to us: And, as a Means to work this Patience, the Lord sets before us, 1. That there is a Cause of every Chastening; and that cause is from our selves; and therefore, no cause to Complain: 2. That He afflicts not willingly; Onely when there is Need, and no more than Needs must: 3. That He hath many Gracious Ends in afflicting; As (1) To humble for sin committed; as in Joseph's rough dealing with his Brethren: (2) To Purge out Dross; as in the case of Manasseh, 2 Chr: 33. 11 and 13. and the Whole Church, Isa: 27. 9. (3.) To Prevent sins we should otherwise fall into; Thus He kept Paul from being Exalted above measure: (4) To Wean us from the World; This He expected from Baruch, And this effect it had upon Asaph. (5) To Exercise our Graces: As Abraham's great faith, by his various temptations; And Paul was much under Infirmities, That he might Magnify the power of Christ. (6) By lesser temptations, and deliverance from them, we are fitted for Greater, and our Faith strengthened, both to bear, and to get through them: Which Greater, had they come afore, might have Overturned us.

1 Pet. 1. 6.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

Jer. 45. 4. 5.

Pf 73. 25.

(4.) *Self-denial*: This is a duty of neereſt concernment to us, ſince we have no ſuch enemies as ſelf-love, and fleſhly luſts, to warr againſt our ſouls. Theſe things conſidered will ſhew, that David's Concluſion is Right and Genvine; *Good and Upright is the Lord, therefore will He teach Sinners in the way*: Even Reason it ſelf might tell us (to be ſure, Sanctified Reason

Reason and experience will) That thus to Command and Direct, is To lead in the Right way; and it highly Commands to us the Righteousness of God.

Sixthly, It is yet farther made out, by His affixing Rewards and punishments, to Good and Evil works respectively, according to what is the proper Result and Natural product of them : *Whatsoever a Man sows that shall he Reap : Every Seed shall have its own body* : He will give to every One, according to His wayes; and the fruit of his doings. Holiness hath in it, a Natural Tendency to life and peace : It is a Tree of life: Grace and Glory grow from the same Root: Salvation is the End of Faith; the Flower that grows upon it. The Work of Righteousness is Peace, and the Effect thereof, Quietness and Assurance for ever. It is sometimes called, The Way of life, *Prov. 12. 28.* Sometimes the fountain and well-spring of life, *Chap. 14. 27.* And it tendeth to life, *Chap. 19. 22.* For, if the Root be holy, the branches cannot be otherwise.

'Tis so likewise with Sin : Death follows Sin, not onely as a punishment for delinquency, but as its natural off-spring: Original corruption is the Root; Sin, the Stalk that grows next upon it; and Death the finishing, or full corn in the ear : This pedigree of it, ye have in *James, Chap. 1. 14, 15.* If there were no Justice to Revenge Sin, Sin would be vengeance to it self : *Sinners lie in wait for their own blood, Pro. 1. 18.* It is their own wickedness that corrects them, *Jer. 2. 19.* The way of Sin inclineth to death, and its footsteps to the Dead : Its steps take hold on hell. Unbelief may be an instance for all; as out of which, all Sins else are derived : This was the Root of Adam's apostacy; and of all that Peoples Rebellions in the Wilderness. Faith is that which holds the Soul to God, its life and blessedness; Unbelief, its departing from Him; or the letting go of its hold; the loosing of the knot; upon which the Soul falls off of its own accord : And the first step from God, sets in a way of Death; As a branch breaking off from its Stock, dies of it self. This was Adam's unbelief; In all Men since, it is a Refusing to Return.

F

Arg. VI.

Gal. 6. 7.

1 Cor. 15.

Isa. 3. 10. 11.

Jer. 32. 19.

Pro. 3. 18.

1 Pet. 1. 9.

Isa. 32. 1. 3

Rom 11. 16.

Pro. 23. 29, 30.

Pro. 13. 21.

Ch 2. 18.

Ch. 5. 5.

Num. 14. 11.

Rom. 11. 20.

Heb. 3. 12.

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This Doctrine is still further confirm'd by the general unanimous consent and affirmation of Those best able to Judge: (1.) They *assert* it; *Job*, a Man of great Wisdom and integrity, (*Not his like in all the Earth*, *Job* 1. 8.) and none so sorely afflicted; yet, sayes *Elihu* to him, (by way of Counsel; as what himself would do in the like case) *I will ascribe Righteousness to my Maker*, *Job* 36. 5. And, *Surely God will not pervert Judgement*, Chap. 37. 12. *God is known* (i. e. He is known to be God) *by the Judgements which He executeth*, *Psal.* 9. 16. *The Lord is Upright; there is no Unrighteousness in Him*, *Psal.* 92. 15. *He loveth Righteousness and hateth Iniquity*, *Psal.* 45. 6, 7. *The Scepter of his Kingdom is a Right Scepter*, ver. 6. *Righteousness and Judgement are the habitation of His Throne*. That *True and Righteous* are his Judgements, is the voice of those in Heaven.

(2) They *submit* to it, even then when most provoked by Mens injurious dealings with them for His sake; and when the Lord's own hand hath been most severe towards them: *Aaron* held his Peace, *Levit.* 17. 3. *It is the Lord* (saith *Eli*) *let Him do as seemeth Him good*: *Hezekiah* also, *Good is the word of the Lord*. Yea, they have done thus, when by the light of natural Reason they could see no reason for it: Witness *Job*, who, when plundered of all, because he feared God and eschewed evill; and could justifie himself to the height, as to any hypocrisy: yet sayes he, *I will make supplication to my Judge*. Look on our Lord and Saviour Himself; and see His confession; *Our fathers cried unto thee and were delivered; But I, though day nor night I am not silent, Thou hearest me not*. How does He close His complaint? Not, Thou dealest more hardly with Me who lets have deserved it, but [*Thou art Holy*.] *Jeremy*, indeed, began to object, because *the way of the wicked prospered, and they were happy that dealt treacherously*: But, he presently bethinks himself, withdrawes his plea and yields the cause; *Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee*. I might instance the Suffrage, even of wicked Men; and of the most obdurate among them; whose Consciences, at times, have enforced their confession of this Truth; and the testimony of an Adversary proves strongly.

Pharaoh

Pf 37. 2.
Deut. 32. 4.
Rev 19. 2.

1 *Sam.* 3. 18.
2 *K.* 20. 19.

Job 9. 15.

Pf 22. 4.

Jer. 12. 1.

Israhel subscribes to it; *The Lord is Righteous, I and my People are wicked.* As also doth *Adonibezek*, and *Saul*, *Exod. 9. 27. Judg. 1. 7. 1 Sam. 24. 17. 19.*

(3) The Saints triumph in the Righteousness of God (as well they may) and call upon others to do the like; *The Lord Reigneth, Let the Earth rejoyce: Psal. 93. 97. 97. O, Let the Nations be glad and sing for joy; For thou shalt judge the People Righteously: Let the Heavens rejoyce, and the Earth be glad before the Lord; For, He cometh, For He cometh to judge the Earth, &c.* And hence it was, that *Paul* and the rest of them, though the present sense of their suffering, was grievous; yet they gloried in them; And Rejoyced greatly, in hopes of that Glory, and Crown of Righteousness, which God, as a Righteous Judge, had prepared for them.

Eightly; The Righteousness of God is yet further illustrated, by *The End and Event of his darkeſt dispensations.* *Ila. 10. 22.* The consumption decreed shall overflow with Righteousness, and Nothing else shall be in it: His people, though long under oppression, He brought them forth at last, with the greater Substance: His leading them about in the Wilderness, as it were in a Maze, forty years together; and bringing them back again to the place they had bin at, many yeares afore; yet it proved to be *the Right way.* And it was for their good in the latter end.

Dauids long persecution by *Saul*, made him the fitter for the Kingdom; and adapted him for the Office of principal Secretary to the Great King; opportunely acquainting him with all the affairs of the heavenly State and Council, that are fit to be known of men: And by his hand and experience, they are Firmed to us; and this amongst the Rest, *Blessed is the Man whom Thou chastenest, and teachest him out of thy Law.* We see it also, by the end the Lord made with *Job*; He brought him forth like gold, and doubled his blessings upon him: The Basket of good things, were sent into captivity for their good: *Paul's* afflictions, turn'd into his Salvation: Even Christ himself, whose temptations, sorrows, and sufferings were such, as never were known by Men; they were intended, and accordingly did, per-

fect and inble Him for His Office of Mediator.

Arg. IX.

Ro 3. 26.

Heb. 6. 20.

With

Ch. 9. 12, 23

Isa. 53. 4, 5.

Lastly, Consider the *Elect*; those precious Soules whom the Lord had loved from everlasting; and determin'd to bring them to Glory: yet, having sinn'd, Not one of them shall enter there, without satisfaction first given to His Justice: Even *These*, He will not Justifie, but in such a way, as to be *just* in so doing: The Mercy-Seat it self must be sprinkled with blood: Especially, consider Christ himself, the *First* Elect and Head of all the Rest; and the Compact made with Him; Who, though he were a Son, His Beloved Son, In whom his Soul delighted; yet if he will undertake for Sinners, He must stand in their stead; *All their Sins must meet upon Him*; and He must bear the punishment due to them: It was *not possible* That Cup should pass from him; No, though He fought it with strong cries and tears; and that of Him that was able to Save Him, Who also loved Him as His own Soul: He was not, He might not be Released, until He had paid the utmost Mite. For, albeit That Grace is perfectly Free to Men, in Pardoning and Saving of them; yet Justice must be satisfied, and Christ was 'bared Nothing. This last unparallel'd Instance, and high Indication of Incomparable Justice, doth greatly illustrate the point in hand, Namely, *That our Great and Sovereign Lord cannot but do Right.*

Inferences from the Righteousness of God.

Inference 1.

First, May this Doctrine prove an Eternal blast, to the vain and presumptuous Confidence of impenitent Sinners; Who, *because vengeance is not speedily executed, have their hearts fully bent and set in them to do evil*: Because the Lord at present holds His peace, they think He is like Themselves, &c. Let them certainly know, that He is able to deal with them: And further, That His *Righteousness obligeth* Him to vindicate Himself: He will by *no means* clear the Guilty, Nor be *always* silent; Though *slow*, yet *Sure*; and strikes home.

Eccles. 8. 11.

Is. 50. 21.

Exod. 34. 7.

home at last: He will arise to Judgement, and set their sins *Pf. 2.5.*
 in order before them; and Reckon with them for all the
 hard speeches, which they (ungodly Sinners) have utter'd
 against Him: The Sight whereof shall strike their trem-
 bling Souls (notwithstanding their stoutness *Now*) with
 horror and amazement; and make even all their Bowels ready
 to gush out: He will wound the hairy Scalp (the proud and *Pf. 62.21.*
 presumptuous head) of every one that goes on in his wicked-
 ness: A Dart shall strike through his Liver, and down with *Pro. 7.23.*
 him to Hell, the Nethermost hell, in a moment. Why *Joh. 15.26.*
 then will you run against the thick Bosses of his Bucklers? and
 set Briars and Thorns in array, against a Devouring flame? *Isa. 33.14*
 Can dry'd stubble dwell with Everlasting burnings? Did *Joh. 9.4.*
 ever any harden himself against God and prosper? No, nor *ch. 27.8.*
 never shall? Where will his hope be, when God taketh a-
 way his Soul! Therefore take up betimes, leave off and *Pf. 46.10*
 know that He is God.

Inference. 2.

Secondly, Let this Doctrine for ever vindicate the holy
 and good ways of God, (both Those he walks in towards
 us, and those He commands us to walk in towards Him)
 from all those senseless Imputations of Harshness, Moroseness,
 Nicety, Preciseness, or what ever else the prophaneness or
 Ignorance of Men can tax them with: For, as it is said, so
 it is found, by the certain and sober experience of all that
 fear Him, and (against such experience, no Reasoning is to
 be admitted) I say, 'tis a General Infallible Experiment,
 That all the ways of Wisdom are pleasantness to him that
 walks in them: which argues, That those who think other-
 wise, are ignorant of them; and therefore not competent
 Judges. 'Tis granted, indeed, That those whose hearts are
 in these good ways of God, have their steps too often
 turn'd aside, and go haltingly in them: But in Truth, the
 Fault is not in the Way, but in the Men: There is some Fra-
 cture in their bones, or dislocation of Joints; Something
 is out of order. A Creepie will limp in Solomon's Porch;

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(on the smoothest pavement) when one that is sound, (winde and Limb) will Run and leap upon Craggy ground. The Law and our hearts were once at perfect agreement; the discord came in by our voluntary swerving from our first Make. Therefore, admit not the least Motion, that looks but awry on the Commands or Disposements of God; but Justifie them to the height, and take shame to your self, as Paul himself did, *The Commandment is holy, but I am Carnal.* Ro. 7. 12.

Inference 3.

Thirdly, If the Lord cannot but do Right, Then let us all take heed of sin, which the Holiness and Justice of God are so inexorably bent against; He will not Pardon without satisfaction: Yea, Beware of *Little Sins*, (Little, I mean, in esteem with Men, or in comparison of some others) Your Nearness to God will not excuse you: *You have known [therefore] you will I punish*; Even *Moses* his servant, for once speaking unadvisedly, was shut out of *Canaan*; and though he would fain have gon into that good land, and solicited the Lord much about it, as if he would have no Denial; yet the Lord would not hear him; *Speak no more to Me of this Matter.* To make light of the least sin because Grace abounds, is to sin against your own soule; and to make the precious blood of Christ a Common thing; (the least is the price of blood) Although He love thee, and that so, as *Never* to take His loving kindness from thee; yet He will not let thee go altogether unpunished: Yea, the Lord may hide from thee the sense of His love, and Make thee feel His displeasure even to the breaking of thy bones, &c. For He must discountenance sin; and that for our good, as well as to Vindicate the honour of His Righteousness.

Amos, 3. 2.
Num. 20. 10, 12

Inference 4.

Fourthly, You that acknowledge God's Uprightness, and profess to be His Children, Convince the World of the truth of

of your Principles by your *practise* : Shew your selves to be His Off-spring, by your *likeness* to Him : *Do Justly, love Mercy, Walk humbly* ; To be *blameless and harmless and without Rebuke*, is your best Argument to Refute the World's calumnies, and to prove your selves to be the *sons of God*. Shew it also, by your justifying God, even whiles He wraps Himself in a Cloud, and His Footsteps are not known. *Phil. 2. 15. Job. 22. 14.*

Inference 5.

Fifthly, Then let None Stumble at present Administrations, Nor admit of a sinister or suspicious thought, touching this Holy Lord God: The Reason of His Wayes, may be unknown, cannot be unjust : He sees through the dark cloud, though you and I cannot. We know, the Lord doth not afflict willingly, and His people are, in heavyness but for a season, and if need be : Then surely, 'Tis meet to be said unto God, I have borne Chastisement ; (i.e. My Sin procur'd it for me, and I have no cause to complain) I will offend no more. Acknowledge his uprightness, and he will be Gracious unto thee. And do it, when thou canst not see the Reason of His Judgments, nor their Tendency ; taking it still for a Rule, That all the wayes of God are perfect ; Nothing can be put to them ; Nor any thing taken from them. 'Twas a good Resolution in Job, That though he were Righteous, yet would he not answer God ; but make supplication to his Judge : And though he should slay him, yet will he trust in Him : And this he would do, even whiles he thought he might maintain his own wayes before Him. *Isa. 10. 22. Pet. 1. 7. Job 34. 31. Job 33. 23. 24. Eccles. 3. 14. Job 9. 15. Job 13. 15.*

Be Patient therefore : The coming of the Lord draweth nigh ; who will judge the World with Righteousness : Let neither the wickeds prosperity, nor the daily Chastenings of His own People, be an offence to thee : Go up into the Sanctuary of God ; There thou shalt know the end. It shall not alwaies be carried thus ; There will be a Reckoning, for the good things they had in their life time : when those that have lived in pleasure, will wish that their Souls had been in thy Souls stead, under all its pressures ; And it shall be

Rom 8. 18.

Heb 12. 11.

Isa 49. 21.

Ch. 60.

2 Cor. 4. 17

Eccles 8. 12, 13

Ps 58. 11.

Rom. 2. 2.

no grief of heart to thee, to remember thy Mort's' and momentary sufferings; when thou seest such peaceable fruits of Righteousness brought forth thereby: When thou shalt be wrapt up, with an holy amazement, and shalt say in thy heart, I lost my Children and was desolate; A Captive and Removing to and fro; (had no abiding place) who hath begotten me these! Whence came they! What root sprang they from! My Light afflictions were not worthy to be compared with this Glory! He'll never repent that he sowed in tears, who brings home his Sheafs with such Joy. But, as you go along to this your blessed home, and sweet Place of Eternal Rest; it may be worth the while to Ruminare such Scriptures as these; *Though a Sinner do evil an hundred times, and his dyes be prolonged (he goes unpunished) yet surely it shall be Well with them that fear God; But it shall not be Well with the wicked: Verily, There is a Reward for the Righteous; Verily He is a God who judgeth in the Earth, And His judgement is according to Truth; And blessed are they that wait for Him, Isa. 3c. 18.*

Inference 6.

Lastly, All the Objections that are levied and brought against the Doctrine of Election (as to the *Absoluteness, Personality, and Eternity* of it) The *Peculiarity* of Redemption; The *Efficacious Predominance* of Grace in Calling; And Believers invincible Perseverance in Faith and Holiness; Would all be disbanded and sent to their own Place, Were but this One Truth, (which none, in words, will deny) truly believ'd and Receiv'd in Love; viz. *That God hath an absolute Right of Dominion over His Creatures, to dispose and Determine of them, as seemeth Him good; and that, In the Doing thereof, He cannot but do Right,*

And so I come to the Matter firstly intended.

OF ELECTION.

THe Doctrine of *Election*, (in the latitude of it) containeth the whole Summ and Scope of the Gospels And our Mindes, if honestly subdued to the Doctrine of God's *Sovereignty*, cannot be employed about a more excellent Subject.

It is called, *The Foundation of God*; not onely, because of the *Supereminency* of it; but as a Foundation of *His—Own* laying, Which God *Himself* and *Alone*, is the *Author* of; and the *Basis* whereof is *Himself*: It is *that* Foundation which standeth *sure*, and *keeps* them All *sure* who stand upon it.

ELECTION is the pitching of *Everlasting love*, Or the Good Pleasure of God-Choosing and Decreeing to Eternal life: It is the *Great Charter of Heaven*; *God's special* and *Free-Grace Deed of Gift* to His Chosen Ones; Made over in trust unto Jesus Christ, for their use and benefit.

Now, in Deeds of Gift, to make them Authentick, there must be inserted, (1) The name of the *Donor*, or Person that *gives*: (2) The Name of the *Donee* or person to *whom*: (3) The *quality* and *extent* of the Thing that is *Given* (4) The *time* when it was done: (5) The *Consideration* that *mov'd* thereto: (6) In case of Impotency, it is usual and necessary to ordain some Friend as *Fessee in trust*; who is to stand seized or Possessed of the Gift for the *Donee's* use: All which are evidently found in Scripture Election, and may be Summ'd into this Proposition,

That

Proposition

That there is a Peculiar People, who were personally chosen of God, in Christ, according to His own good pleasure; and ordained to Eternal Life, before the World began.

Before I come to a down-right proof of the Proposition, I shall First Explain the Terms; And Secondly Produce a few Instances of a lower kind of Election, *scil.* To Matters of a lower Concern, than That of Eternal Life; which yet might be intended for a Type, and Shadow of it.

I. For Explanation: This word [*Peculiar*] denotes the Exemption or Privileging of a Person or Thing, from the power of another, in whose jurisdiction it was or seem'd to be. It sometimes signifies Riches or Substance, which is of a Man's own proper getting, by Labour and Industry. It is also us'd, to denominate such part of a Man's Estate, as he keeps in his own hands; which our Law calls, his *Demesne Lands*. In all which respects, the *Elect* are aptly term'd a *Peculiar People*: For (1) Though Satan be Prince of the world, and rules on every side; yet, as touching the *Elect*, it is but an usurp'd and temporary jurisdiction that he hath over them: They do, indeed, belong to another Prince, to whom their Chief Lord hath given them: who therefore in the appointed time, will rescue them from that usurpation. (2) They are the Lord's *Treasure* or *Inheritance*, obtained by Labour indeed, with Sweat and Blood: Than which, nothing is more a Man's own, nor harder parted with: Such was the portion bestow'd by Jacob on his beloved Joseph, even That which he got with his *Sword* and with his *Bow*. And (3) They are the Lord's *Demesnes*; He keeps them in His own hands: Tends them as the *Apple of His eye*: He will not trust them in the hands of others; No, not of their own selves.

Gen 48.22.

To [*Ordain*] is used here, in the same sense as to Predestinate, Appoint, Prepare, Decree, or Predetermine things to come. Which is done in such sort and manner, that the Event shall certainly succeed; and that, just as was Foreintended and Designed. In this sense Men cannot be said to Predestinate, because they cannot, with any certainty, Determine of things not yet in being: But, all things were present with God from Eternity; And His Decree the Cause of their Futurition, or Standing forth.

By [*Eternal life*] I understand, Not only the Saints Actual possession of Blessedness and Glory; (which consists in their perfect Conformity to God, and Communion with Him) but also, Whatever is *Requisite* thereto, by way of *Right, Preparation, or Otherwise*; wherein are comprehended, The *Mediation of Christ*; *Effectual Calling*; and *Final Perseverance* in Faith and Holiness: Which are, indeed, but so many parts, or Subdivisions of Election: Yet have them all in one verse in the Old Testament, both as Appropriate to the same Persons, and as being inseparable: It is in *Isa. 62. 12.* Where Those for whom the high way is prepared and cast up, are said to be *The Holy People*; (there's their Election) *The Redeemed of the Lord*; (That implies the Office of Christ as Mediator.) They are also said to be *Sought out*; (which imports their *Effectual Calling* :) And *A City not forsaken* : (This implies their *Perseverance* :) And they are here put in Succession, as they fall in Order of time; Election is therefore called, *A Preparing unto Glory*, *Rom. 9. 23.*

They were [*Personally*] Chosen; that is, the Objects of Election were singled forth and pitch'd upon by Name. Chosen [*In Christ, or Into Christ*] as their Head and Mediator; That thereby, their Election might be secur'd; that is, that the Good things and Benefits they were Chosen unto, might (by their being in Christ) be *Righteously theirs*, and accordingly applied to them.

[*Before the World began*] The same thing for brevity sake is commonly called *Eternity*: and in Scripture Phrase, *From Everlasting*.

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[According to His Own good Pleasure] This shews us the Root of Election; Or, the great Bottom-Ground, on which it is founded; Exclusive to all things else, as being any way Causal, Contributory, or Motive thereto.

2. For Instances of a lower kind of Election. Consider here, God's Choosing and Destinating certain Persons by Name; and Some of them, *before they were born*, to signal and eminent Service in the world: wherein they were Patterns of the Election we are treating of: and may well be Reckoned a Collateral Proof and Evidence of it.

Abraham was pitch'd upon, to be the Root and Father of God's peculiar people; Whom He would Own and Honour above the Nations of the World; And that in him, *All Families of the Earth should be blessed*: Which contains a Promise, That the Messiah, or Saviour of the World, should come of his posterity: A wonderful high Honour! But, what was there in *Abraham*, that might Move God thus to prefer him above the Rest of his Kindred? Was he any thing more to God, or had he served Him better than other Idolaters with whom he liv'd? No, in no wise: and yet the Lord singled him forth and called him alone. And, in truth, no other Reason can be given for it, than what is given for His love to *Abraham's* posterity; *He loved them because He loved them*. Nor was he pitch'd upon to be the Father of many Nations, nor *Sarah* to be the Mother of them, for any natural fruitfulness in them above others: For, *Abraham's* body was now dead; And *Sarah*, besides her Natural barrenness, was past the age of Child bearing; which occasioned her to laugh at the promise: For who (indeed) would make choice of a dry'd Stock and a barren Soil to begin his Nursery with? In such materials is nothing to induce to it.

Gen. 2 1-8.

Isa. 51. 2.

Deut. 7 7, 8.

The same course He was pleas'd to take with *Abraham's* immediate Seed: He takes not all of them; but, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*. Thus *Isaac* was taken and *Ishmael* left.

And

And though *Abraham's* prayer was heard for *Ishmael*, so as to have him blessed with outward things; yet, as to the main thing, God rejects him; and Resolves To establish his Covenant with *Isaac*, who was yet unborn.

Gen. 17. 19.

The like also He doth by *Isaac's* Children: *Jacob* he loved, but *Esau* He hated: Which is both the Prophet's, and Apostle's exposition of those words [*The Elder shall serve the Younger*] And this difference was put before they were born; yea, and intail'd also upon their posterities: The One, are the people of his wrath, against whom He hath indignation for ever; *Their Captivity shall not Return; When the whole Earth rejoyceth they shall be desolate, &c.* But for *Jacob*, the Lord will bring them back to their own Land, and plant them, and build them assuredly; and do them good with His whole heart.

Gen 25 23.

Mal. 1 2, 3.

Rom. 9. 12, 13.

Obad v. 10, 18.

Exe. 35. 5.

Jer. 32 41.

But let be observed, It was not *Jacob's* more worthy demeanour, whether foreseen or acted, that procured him the blessing: *Esau* did more for it than He, and more sincerely; He hunted for Venison, and for true Venison; such as his Father loved; which he also makes ready, and brings with speed, big with expectation of his blessing; which also he seeks importunately, with tears and bitter crying.

Gen. 27 5, 31.

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Now, what good thing doth *Jacob* do, to inherit the blessing?

1. He goes about to invade Another's Right; for the blessing belong'd to the First-born.
2. He seeks to pervert the known intention of his Father, which was to bless *Esau*.
3. He abuseth his Father with counterfeit Venison.
4. He takes the Name of God in vain, to make his dispatch the more probable.
5. He seeks it by fraud and down-right lying: He cloaths his Neck and Hands with the Kids skin; and roundly affirms himself to be *Esau*. (Very improper means to obtain a blessing!)

Gen 27. 26.

It need not be ask'd, which of the Two's deportment was most deserving: One would easily conclude

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the blessing to be *Esa's*: But see the Event! He that carries himself unworthily, carries away the blessing; He that behaves himself dutifully to obtain it, is dismiss'd without it: And though his Father blessed *Jacob* unwittingly, and by mistake; yet, when he came to know it, he was so far from reversing what he had done, That he passionately affirms it; *I have blessed him; yea and he shall be blessed.*

Rom 9. 11.

Would we know, now, the Reason of this strange and (according to men) irrational Event? It was, *That the Purpose of God, according to Election might stand* (The elder must serve the younger) *Not of Works, but of Him that Calleth.* And 'tis wonderfull to observe, how God ordered the Series and whole course of this Transaction, as intending it a full and pregnant example of *Eternal Election*: For, it holds forth to us, The *Sovereignty* of God over His Creatures; The *freeness* of His Grace; in Choosing those that are *less* deserving; The *Sure effect* of His Purposes; His wise and certain Ordering of things relating to such an End; And His using of Meanes and Instruments therein, quite besides the *Natural* Scope of them, and contrary to their own Intendment.

Lev. 20. 26.

Deut. 7. 6.

14. 2.

26. 18. 19.

Then for the Israelites, This people the Lord Chose in *Abraham* 400 yeares before He publicly owned them: They are expressly term'd *An Elect Nation*, as being separated from the Rest of the World; *An holy, special, peculiar, people unto God*; He took them for *His Own portion, the Lot of his Inheritance*: Read his own words, (for they are precious words with those to whom they appertain) *Levit. 20. 26. Ye shall be holy unto Me: For I have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine, Deut. 7. 6, The Lord thy God hath Chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth: Chap. 26. 18, 19, The Lord this day hath Avouched thee to be His peculiar people, and to make thee high above all Nations: Deut. 10. 15, The Lord had a delight in thy fathers, to love them, and He Chose their Seed after them, even you above all people, &c.* But were they as far above other Nations in goodness, in greatness, or excellent demeanor?

And

And was *that* it which intituled them to this honour? No such matter, As appears (1) by the Reason there assigned; *Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me, above all people, [For all the Earth is Mine.]* It is, as if the Lord had said, There is no difference between you and other Nations; All the earth is Mine, and I may take where I will; I am not tyed to any: I might take of them, and discard you; They cannot carry it more unworthily than you have done, and will do; I looked from Heaven, and considered their works and yours; I see that your hearts are fashion'd alike: And (2) Their after-demeanour did abundantly verify it; and the Lord foresaw it; *I know that thou wouldst deal treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb; That thou wouldst be obstinate, thy Neck an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; and that thou wouldst do only evil from thy youth up:* &c. What then was the Cause or Motive of God's choosing them above others? It was His undeserved love and favour to them; He loved them because He loved them.

Exod. 19.5.

Isa 48. 8.

ver. 4.

Jer 32. 30.

Deu 7. 8.

ch. 9. 4.

Come to David: God had provided Him a King among Jesse's Sons, and Samuel must go to anoynt him: but it must be Him whom the Lord should Name to him: Not the eldest, or goodliest person: And therefore, sayes he, (when they pass before him,) *The Lord hath not Chosen this; Nor this; Nor these;* But David: 'Tis true, the Lord did not mention David's name to Samuel; but, He did what was equivalent; for, when David comes in, He tells him, *This is He, Anoynt him.* And observe, This [he] was the youngest, the meanest, and most unlikely; scarce reckon'd as one of the family: (for he was not brought in among the Rest.) Then, Note his Circumstances; His employment was to keep the sheep; His exercise, what was it, but such as is reckon'd effeminate? He addic'd himself to Musick: see also his Complexion or Constitution of body, White and Ruddy; no promising character of a Martial Spirit: And yet this Man (or rather, this lad and stripling) thus qualified and thus educated,

he

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he must be the Captain of the Lord's host; who yet had the greatest enemies to deal with; and therefore had need of a Man of courage and conduct to be over them. Well! let *David's* birth, complexion, employment, education, be what it will; Never so unlikely in all humane respects; yet, this *David is*, and he *must* be the man, whom the Lord will honour, to Rule his people, to fight their battels, and to do exploits. In this choice, the Lord was pleased to set-by whatever is taking with men; *He seeth not as Man seeth*, i. e. He regards not Men for their Natural accomplishments: If for any thing, it must be (probably) for some excellent endowment of the *Mind*; and that of *Wisdom* is of as weighty consideration in the choice of a Prince, as any other: But this is no Inducement or Motive to God; *He respects not any that are wise of heart*: And if He did, it Was not here to be had; *David* had no Prince-like qualities above his brethren, until afterwards: Which thing is plainly intimated in the thirteenth verse, where it is said, *The Spirit of the Lord came upon Him [from that day forward.]*

Job 37. 24.

Then for *Jeremy*, The Lord ordains him to be a Prophet; sets him over Nations and Kingdoms; commissionates him to Root out and pull down; To build and to plant: &c. Why? what had *Jeremy* done, that the Lord should call him to so Imperial a work? Sure, no great matter; for this he was ordained to, before he was born; *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; I sanctified thee and ordained thee a Prophet*: Jer. 1. 5. It also appears by his own Confession, how unmeet he was for such a work, and how unwilling; *I cannot speak for I am a Child*, ver. 6.

Isa. 44. 28.
Ch. 45. 1-5.
v. 13

Another Instance may be *Cyrus*; This man was decreed to a great and noble work; It was, in brief, to destroy the Golden Monarchy; To break in pieces the hammer of the whole Earth, To Release God's people out of Captivity, and to build His Temple: and this more than an hundred years before *Cyrus* was born: The Lord styles him his *Anointed*, His *Elect*, His *Shepherd*, and One that should perform all

His pleasure; And He calls him by his *Name* too; which is *ver. 4. 5.* twice repeated as a thing to be remark'd : And to enforce it the more, He adds a note of *Narrower* observance; *I have called thee [even] by thy Name.*

Was *Cyrus* thus chosen, because he would be a puissant Prince? Or did the Lord make him puissant and victorious, because appointed to such a work? Hear what the Lord Himself (who best knows the ground of His own Designation) says of him; *Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, (i. e. I gave him strength and taught him how to use it) I will loose the loyns of Kings, and open to him the two leaved Gates; I will go before him, — I will break in pieces the Gates of brass, and cut in* *ver. 2.* *sunder the bars of iron, &c.* But what shall *Cyrus* have done, That the great God should do him this honour? He did not so much as know the Lord; which also is twice repeated, as a matter worthy our observation.

Lastly, *Paul*; The Lord from Heaven commissionates him His *Preacher General* among the Gentiles; to bear His Name before Kings; To Mawl and Ransack the devil's kingdom; and to turn the World upside-down; (Witness his doings at *Ephesus*, *Athens*, and other places :) And this he was called to, even whiles in the heat of his persecuting fury against that Name, which now he is sent to preach : And that there was no motive on *Paul's* part, himself is witness, where speaking of that his Call, he ascribes it to the pleasure and power of God, as much as he doth his natural birth, *Gal. 1. 15.*

I might also bring in the Stories of *Sampson*, *Josiah*, *John Baptist*, and others, to the same effect : but that time would fail.

Now, These instances may not be valued as Historical Relations only; (that would be too narrow a meaning for them) but according to the Scripture-way of inferring and improving to spiritual Uses; and so, they will be a good Preparatory proof of the business in hand : For, if there be

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an Election *personal* unto things of a *temporary* Concernment ; and that, so long afore some of the persons were in being : If also, there be an *absoluteness* in God's Decrees concerning these ; How much more in Matters of *Eternal* weight ! And if the Lord did not look *out of Himself* for the *moving* consideration on which He selected those persons to their several honors, and atchievements ; (and if He had, He should have found none) Much less can Election to *Eternal Salvation*, and *Union with Himself*, be founded in the Creature : Doth God take care for Oxen ? From the less to the greater is a Scriptural way of arguing, and proves strongly.

I come now to a more direct and positive proving the Proposition ; wherein my present scope is not so much to prove, *That there is an Election* ; as *What* this Election is ; *viz.* How it is *Qualified* and *Circumstantiated* : And this respects the *Objects* of Election, with the *Manner*, *Time*, and *Motives* of it.

And yet, as introductive to *these*, it may be expedient to touch on the *Other* ; And so (for the clearer discussion thereof) I cast the Proposition into six branches.

- I. *That there is an Election of Men to Salvation.*
- II. *That, this Election is Absolute.*
- III. *That, it is Personal.*
- IV. *That it is from Eternity.*
- V. *That the Elect are Chosen in Christ.*
- VI. *That Election is founded upon Grace.*

These being made good by positive Scripture, or Arguments deduced thence ; It will not much concern us what is alleged to the contrary.

I. *There*

I. There is an Election of Men to Salvation.

That is, there are *Some*, a certain Remnant, that shall be saved; and this by virtue of Election. This is clearly implied in those noted and compendious sentences, *Rom. 11. 7*, The Election hath obtained: *Acts 2. 47*, The Lord added to the Church such as should be saved: and *Chap. 13. 48*, As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. But, more expressly, in *Rom. 11. 5*, There is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace: *1 Thes. 5. 9*, God hath not appointed us unto wrath; but to obtain Salvation: and *2 Thes. 2. 13*, God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation.

And these are called The Election, or Party of Elect Ones; as those Circumcised, are called the Circumcision; and the Angels that stood, are distinguished from those that fell, by the title of Elect. They are also said to be chosen Vessels; and Vessels of Mercy; as those that are left, Vessels of wrath, and Sons of Perdition: The Scripture still sets them forth by distinguishing characters;

I. As a Party separate from the World; I (sayes Christ) have chosen you out of the World, *Joh. 15. 19*. and *Ch. 17. 9*, I pray not for the World, but for them which Thou hast given me: and ver. 16, They are not of the World, even as I am not of the World: *Mark 4. 11*, Unto [you] it is given to know the Mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto [them without] all things are done in parables. Of Jacob and Esau (who were an evident type of this Separation) it is said to Rebekah, Two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of people, *Gen 25. 23*. And of Jacobs posterity, The People shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations; *Num. 23. 9*. And This People (sayes God) have I formed for myself: These are the People of His Holyness; The Rest are Adversaries.

Isa. 43. 21.
Ch. 63. 18
1 Pet. 2. 8, 9.

II. As Men of another Race or Kindred; and, as springing from another Root: We are of God, and the whole World lyeth in wickedness: (Or, in that Wicked One, as their Root

1 Joh. 5. 19.

Joh. 8. 47.

1 Thes. 5. 5.

1 Joh. 4. 4-6

Joh. 8. 23.

ver. 42, 44.

Isa. 63. 19

Joh. 6. 37.

Matth. 23. 8.

Mat. 13. 38.

Luke 20. 34-35

Rev. 21. 27

Ch. 20. 15.

and Head) He that is of God, heareth God's Word: Ye therefore hear them not; because ye are not of God. The one Party are said to be Children of Light; the Other, of the Night: The One, of God; the Other, of the World: The One is from Above; the Other, from Beneath: God is the Father of the One; the Devil, of the Other.

III. As Men subject to another Head; We are Thine (sayes the Church to God) Thou never bearest Rule over them: All that the Father giveth me (saith Christ) shall come to me: My Sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me; And a Stranger they will not follow: And this, because One is their Master even Christ. Of others He saith, that they will not come unto Him, John 5. 40.

IV. As belonging to Another World. The good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom; And they are distinguished from the Children of this World, as a Party accounted worthy to obtain the world to come: And accordingly we find, That None are admitted into the New Jerusalem, but whose names were found written in the Book of Life: And whose name soever was not written there, was cast into the Lake of fire. On the same account, Judas is said to go to his own place; Acts 1. 25. And the Elect, into the Kingdom prepared for them, Matth. 25. 34.

II. Election is Absolute:

In this are two things of great import; Irrevocableness and Independency: The Decree is Irrevocable on God's part, and Independent as to humane performances: God will not go back from His Purpose to save His People; Nor shall their own unworthiness or averiness make void His most Gracious intentment. And hence (I suppose, it is, that) those various expressions of this same thing (viz, Predestinate, Ordain, Prepare, Appoint) have nothing subjoyn'd that is like a conditional. There are, indeed; a kind of Conditions (or rather Qualifications) that must and always do, precede the final complement of Election; (as Repentance towards God, and

Faith

Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ) which therefore may be called Conditionals of *Salvation*, but not so to *Election*.

Election is the great *Fundamental Institute* of the Gospel ; It is *That*, which in humane States is call'd The *Supream Law*, which is both *Irreversible* in it self, and requires that all *inferiour* administrations be *accommoded* thereto : So, the *Salvation* of God's Elect, being the highest law of the Heavenly State and Kingdom ; mult, on the same (and firmer) ground, remain *Inviolable*. It is *That* for which all things else have their being : The Plot whereby God designs to Himself the *highest Glory* : And for *which* He hath been at *such Cost* ; that, should His designment miscarry, the whole Creation could not countervail the dammage. He could not therefore (for God cannot deny Himself) I say, He could not so contrive the grandest Design of His Glory, as that it should ever need to be *Revoked* or *Altered* : Nor could He leave it obnoxious to *disappointment* ; (which it must be, if ventured on a created bottom) Yea, it behoved Him (as *Supream Law-giver*) so to determine and subjugate *All* ; that the great *End* of all might remain *infrustrable*.

'Tis granted true, That the best-founded States upon Earth are subject to mutation : Princes may die, and then their thoughts perish : Their minds may alter, and depart from their first Resolutions : Successors may drive a contrary Interest : Unlook'd-for accidents may entangle them : Forreign Enemies may encroach upon them, and obstruct their work : Or the Peoples own folly may be such, as to marr and defeat the best-lay'd designs for their own good . Humane affairs are exposed to a Thousand Incidents, which humane prudence can neither prevent nor provide against.

But it is not so with God, No Event can be new to Him ; He declares the end from the beginning : His Judgement and Purpose cannot alter ; He is of one mind, and who can turn Him ? He is also *Immortal*, and the thoughts of His Heart stand fast to all generations : No Creature can seclude it self from

Pſ. 33. 11.

His Government; In His hand is the soul of every living thing: Yea, the most casual (to us) and opposite Emergencies, are by His Power and wisdom, reducible to His purpose; and cannot resist their being made subservient to His Will. And this may be one Reason, why Election is so often affirm'd to be *From the beginning*, and *From the Foundation of the World*; viz. to shew, That whatever should be in time, should be subordinate to Election; which is all one as to make it *Absolute*.

The *Absoluteness* of Election may be evinc'd by such Arguments as these.

Arg. 1.

I. If it were not Absolute, it would be but after the Covenant of Works: which being *conditional*, how soon was it broken, even by One who had power to keep it! And if Man in that honour did not abide in it; how should he Now, when so strong and brawny a bias is grown upon his heart, that he runs Counter ever since? If there had been a Law given that could have given life, Righteousness should have been by the Law; Which shews, that the New Covenant does more for us than the Old; for it giveth life; and then it must give the performance of the Condition, which that life hangs upon. It also shews that the first Covenant did not give life; and that it fail'd because it was *conditional*: The Law shews our duty, but gives not wherewith to perform it; The new Covenant does both, by writing the Law in the heart.

Gen. 6. 3.

Gal. 3. 21.

Eph. 2. 12.

All under the Covenant of Works, are *without God*, *without Christ*, and *without Hope*: and this, because strangers to the Covenant of Grace, or Grace of Election. If therefore, the Elect shall be in a better Condition than before; their Election must be *Absolute*: And that it might be so, the New Covenant was made with Christ on their behalf; and is that Grace given us in Him, before the World began.

2 Tim. 1. 9.
Tit. 1. 2.

Arg. 2.

II. Election must be granted *Absolute*, because whatever can be supposed the condition of it, is a part of the Thing it self

Self: Much like that promise of God to *Abraham*, *To thy Seed will I give this land*: In which promise, the Lord undertakes as well to give *Abraham* a Seed to inherit that land, as that land to his Seed: and accordingly we find, that the next Head of that Seed, was born by virtue of the Promise: So the whole course and Series of things conducing to the final accomplishment of Election, is included in it, and ascertain'd by it; and that with such firmness and security, as if the end it self had been attain'd, when the Decree was made; as (namely) Redemption from Sin; Effectual Calling; and Perseverance to Glory: (of which more fully under those Heads) which also seems to be the meaning of the Apostle in *1 John 2. 2*, where he makes Eternal life it self, to be the Substance of the Promise.

III. It must be *Absolute*, because by *such* an Election *Arg. 3.*
only can Salvation be *Insur'd*. This bottom *Adam* had not in his Primitive State; He was made upright, but his *Continuing* that state, was hung upon his well-using of what he had, without any additional help, besides his original Stock. In him may be seen the utmost that created Grace, of it self, can do; even in a state of *Perfection*: Unto which being left, How soon did he degenerate and come to Ruin! And all his Posterity would have run the same course, if placed in his stead; as we know they have done (One by One) Notwithstanding all the helps, which are given in common, unto men. And 'tis no wonder, Since *Now* they have so strong a Bias to evil, which *Adam* had not. And if there be any advantage cast in, (which some do affirm, and call it The New Covenant) the more is our Doctrine confirm'd: For, the more helps they have, if yet they fall short; (as they do) the more evident it is, That nothing short of *such* an Election will secure them. An Example of this we have in the Old World; who, by all their Natural Ingenuity, and long lives to improve it, together with *Noah's* sixscore years preaching, and the Spirits striving; were not led unto God; but still grew from bad to worse, until all the imaginatious of their hearts were only evil, and that continually. And *Gen. 6. 5*
this

ver. 12.

this was not the Case of a few, or some; but of the whole Race universally; *All flesh had Corrupted his way.*

1 Tim. 1. 16.

It is True, That Noah was found Righteous; and as true it is, That Election was it that made him so, as ver. 8, *But Noah found Grace in the eyes of the Lord*; and this, in the same sense, That Paul obtained mercy, *Scil.* By Mercy's obtaining or taking hold of him.

Ps 147. 19. 20.

Ezek. 16. 51.

Isa. 1. 6.

It may also be seen in the people of Israel; who, over and above their Common or Natural Grace, had many helps and additions, that others had not; *The Lord dealt not so with any Nation, as with them*; And yet, the Generality of them so bad, *That they justified their Sister Sodom.*

Eph 2. 5, 8.

Rom. 5. 21.

The first Covenant thus failing; such was the Grace of our Lord, (foreseeing it) as to determine of a second, or New Covenant; by which He would fix and secure a Remnant, and that *Infalibly*: And hence it is termed, The *Covenant of Grace*, as not depending at all upon Works; and This is That Grace that *Saves*, and *Reigns to Eternal life*: And these are those *sure mercies of David*, recorded in the 55 of *Isaiah*. It is the *Absoluteness* of it, that makes it a Better Covenant.

Arg. 4.

IV. There is the same Reason for the Absoluteness of Men's Election, as of Christ's. That Man or humane Body, which the second Person was to Assume and Unite to Himself, was not Ordain'd to that Union, upon any Condition whatever, as (namely) If He should fulfil all Righteousness, Destroy the Devil, dissolve his works, and make Attonement for sin: For these He could never have done without that Union: And that His Ordination thereto was *Absolute*, appears by Heb. 10. 5, *A Body hast Thou prepared Me*; And Luke 1. 35, *That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Matth. 1. 21, *He shall save His people from their sins.* In which places the Absoluteness of the Decree for that Man's being United to the Son of God, is evidently set forth. And, That our Election, (as to this Circumstance of it) holds proportion with that of Christ, ye will see more fully afterwards.

V. It

V. It was necessary That Election should be *Absolute*. because of the *Absoluteness* of God's Decree for the death of Christ; unto which He was Fore-ordained *irrepealably*; And all that were saved before He suffered, were saved on the Credit of that Decree. The Scripture also tells you plainly, That *He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World*; and that it was *not possible* That Cup should pass from Him. And if it be a thing below the prudence of Men, to lay down the price without securing the Purchase: Then surely, the Wisdom of God would never determine the death of His Son, for Men's Salvation, and leave the Salvation of those very Men at an uncertainty; which needs it must be, if Election were not *Absolute*.

Arg 5.

1 Pet. 1. 19, 20

Rev 13. 8.

Math. 26 39.

42.

Lastly, It might also be argued from the Nature of Divine Promises; which are *patterns* and Declarative Copies of the Decree. Now, the Promises touching Spiritual blessings, are *Absolute*; They are of that Word, which is *for ever settled in Heaven*: See the Promises of sending Christ to be a Redeemer, *Gen. 3. 15*. The Holy Ghost to sanctifie and lead into all Truth, *Joh. 16. 7*. To sprinkle clean water upon them: To give them a New heart: To cause them to walk in his Statutes: That He will be their God, and they shall be His people, and shall not depart from Him; That if they sin, He will Chastise them with the rods of Men; but His everlasting kindness He *will not* take from them: And that at last He will *present them faultless before the Presence of His Glory*. These all, with others of like tenour, are delivered in Positive and Absolute Terms; without any shew of Reservation, Proviso, Condition, or Hesitation about them. And if *These* (which are Transcripts of the Decree) be *Absolute*; It follows, That the Decree also is the same. And on this Ground it is, the Apostle stands, when he challengeth all the World to Nullifie God's Election; which he never would have done, had it not been *Sovereignly Absolute*.

Arg 6.

Pf. 119. 89.

Ezek 36. 26

Jer. 24. 7.

Jude, ver 24.

Rom. 8. 33 34

III. Election is Personal.

AND

IV. It is from Eternity.

These two I put together in proof, because they are frequently joyned in Scripture.

It was not the *whole lump of Mankind*, that was the Object of Election; Nor was this Election (as some speak) a Decree to Elect such as should happen to be *thus* and *so* qualified: But, Certain *Determinate Persons* were Chosen by Name, or singled out from among the Rest, and ordain'd to Eternal life. Our Saviour styles them *The Men that were given Him [out] of the World*, John 17. 6. And they were Given Him by Name (as well as number) and by those Names He knows them, John 10. 3, and 14. And that this Election was transacted from Eternity, is evident, John 17. 23. with ver. 24. Eph. 1. 4. Rev. 13. 8. and Chap. 17. 8. &c.

These may be Argued,

Arg. 1.

I. From the Example of *Christ's* Election: It was not a person uncertain, that was to be Lord and Christ; but, the Second Person in Humane Nature: And this Capacity He sustain'd from *Everlasting*. Nor was it *Any* Body, which He might assume, but that very same numerical Body, that was prepared for Him; Heb. 10. 5. with Psal. 40. 7. And this very Person He loved before the foundation of the World, John 17. 2.

Pro. 8. 23-31.

1 Pet. 1. 19, 20.

It is worthy Observation, how *particular* the Decree was, even in things *Circumstantial* to our Lord Christ; As that He should come of *Abraham's* Stock, of *Judah's* Tribe, of *David's* Lineage, Be conceived in a Virgin, Born at *Bethlem*, and this, when the Sceptre was departing from *Judah*; That He should be Buffeted, Scourged, Spit-upon, hanged on a Tree; His hands and His feet pierced; That gall and vinegar should be given Him to drink; That a bone of Him should

should not be broken; (even whiles on both sides of Him, they were) That His Garments should be parted , and lots cast on His Vesture ; As also, That He should rise again the third day, &c. And that these were *all Decreed*, appears by the Prophecies of them ; which are the Decree *exemplified* (or Drawn out of the Register.) As touching His Resurrection, It is said Expressly, *I will declare the Decree* : And the same is *Ps 2.7.* as true of all the Rest.

And if the Election of the Head was *Personal* and from Eternity ; why not theirs that should make up His Body, since They did as really exist *Then*, as the *Humane Nature* of Christ did ? Besides, it was very agreeable, That He and They should both be appointed *together* ; For, He could not be an *Head*, but with respect to a *Body* : And that they were expressly Determin'd of, appears by 139 *Psa . v. 16.* *In thy book were all my Members written, when as yet there was none of them.* If any say, That was meant of David's Members ? I answer, That if God thought the Members of an *Earthly* body worthy His Registering ; He could not be less particular and Exact, about the Mystical Body of His *Son* : Besides, *David was His Type.*

Christ also was Ordain'd to be a *Saviour*, and that by His death ; and both *from the foundation of the World* : It was *1 Pet. 1. 20.* therefore expedient, *Then* also to be Determined, How many, and *who* in particular, should have Salvation by Him : He was not To die for Himself, but for those, whose security He undertook. Now, it is not a thing proper, to speak of *Security* or *Bail*, but with respect to a *Debtor* or *Offender* ; And that Debtor or Offender must be *known* too, and *Named* ; Or else, the entring of Bail is an Insignificant Act ; especially, where the Surety hath no debt or default of his own to be charged with. Our Lord and Saviour did not offer Himself (if I may so speak) for *some bodie's* sins, but uncertain *whose* : *Aaron* knew Whose Trespasses he offer'd for ; Their Names were graven on his breast-plate : Not their *National* Name, (viz. *Israelite* or *Believer*) but their *Personal* Names, *Reuben, Simeon, Levi,* — So had our Great High Priest, or He could not have made attonement for us : And that place

(*Rev. 13.8.*) points at the *same* time for *both* ; Those words [*From the foundation of the World*] do refer as well to the writing of their Names in the Book of life, as to the Lamb's being slain. And if it be said, It must refer to that as was *last* named ; then let *ver. 8.* of the *17. Chap.* speak for it ; where, deciphering those who shall wonder after the beast, he says they are such whose Names were *not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the World* : what can be more express!

Arg. 2. **II.** The Design of God in the death of Christ, could not otherwise be secur'd. Had the design been, To Purchase Salvation for *Believers*, without ascertaining the *Persons* that should believe ; it had been uncertain, Whether *any* should be *saved*, because uncertain Whether *any* would *believe*. If *Certain*, That some would believe ; This Certainty must be *Decreed* ; (For Nothing future, could be certain Otherwise.) And if it was *Decreed*, That *Some* should believe ; The *Individuals* of that [*some*] must be *Decreed* also : For, Faith is the Gift of God ; and could not be foreseen in *any*, but whom He had *Decreed* to give it unto. Which laid together are a good demonstration, That those Christ should die for, were as well Pre-ordain'd, as That He should die for them, and that *definitely* and by *Name*.

Arg. 3. **III.** It may further be Argued, from the Fathers *preparing a kingd'm from the foundation of the World*, and Manions, or Places in it.

To prepare the way of this Argument ; Consider the *Punctuality* of God's dispolements in things of a *Lower Moment* : He did not Create the Earth in vain ; (*i. e.* To stand empty and void, as at its first formation) Nor the several quarters thereof to be Inhabited *indefinitely*, by some Nation or Other, who should happen to get possession of them : But *He divided to the Nations their inheritance and the bounds of their Habitation* : Mount Scir was given to *Esau*, and *Ar* to the Children of *Lot* : Each Nation had its limits

Deut. 32. 8.
Abt. 17. 26.

mits staked out, and this *from the dæyes of old*. And if we *Deut. 2. 5, 9.* may distinguish of *Æts* in God, and of *Time* in Eternity; His Purpose to *firm* and *bring forth those Nations*, must needs be as early, as to Create and furnish those parts of the World which they should Inhabit.

Now, *Earthly Settlements* being of trivial Moment to the *Heavenly Mansions*; it seems a good Consequent, That if yet, particular Nations were fore-appointed for particular Provinces on Earth; Much more should particular Persons be design'd for those particular Mansions in Heaven: And, it either were appointed afore the other; It must be the Persons: For, *the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath.*

The Domestiques of God's House or Place of Glory, are a sacred State and Order of *Kings and Priests*; and Each individual Person hath his place or Apartment set out for him. Those Glorious Pallaces were not prepared for Believers indefinitely; but for certain *Determinate Persons particularly*; The Twelve Apostles shall have their Twelve Thrones, and every One his Own: This is evident by our Saviour's answer to the Mother of Zebede's children; *To sit on my right hand and on my left, is not Mine to give; but it shall be given to them for [whom] it is prepared of my Father*: If for Believers indefinitely, why not for these two Brethren as soon as any other: especially since they first made request for them? The Truth is, those Places were not *now* to be disposed of; it was determined, *who* should have them, long before; even *From the foundation of the World*. The scope of this Answer was not to shew, That the places requested for, were prepar'd for Believers; (for these were Believers who made request for them) but that they were Appointed for Certain particular Persons, and they must have them. *Math. 20. 23.* *Mat. 23. 35.*

Much might be added, in confirmation of these two branches, But, by these I hope, it is clear, That Election is *Personal* and from *Eternity*.

V. Election is in Christ.

O R,

The Elect are Chosen in Christ.

It was requisite, the New Covenant should have an Head and Mediatour, as well as the Old; That Righteousness and life might flow from Him into all the Elect Seed; as sin and death had done from Adam: In which respect, Christ and He are set forth as Parallels, in *Romans* 3. from *ver* 12. to 21.

The benefits which the Elect are Chosen unto, they are made partakers of by their Union with Christ; He is the Root in whom the *Fulness* dwels: Not only the *Foundation* on which the Church is built; but the *Rock* which affords all the *Spiritual Materials* of the Heavenly Temple; Even the *Cement* that holds one part to another, and the whole to Himself; and this, by virtue of the Decree: For, We are to Consider, that there is a *Decretive* Union before the *Actual*, and That influenceth *This* into Being; and that as really, as the determined death of Christ did the Salvation of Those who died before Him.

Rom. 5. 2.

Though Christ be not the *Cause* of Election; yet He is the Grand *Means*, by whom we obtain the blessedness we were Chosen unto: By Him it is, That *We have Access into that Grace, wherein we stand*: And we shall find, that the Epistles generally, when they speak of the Great things relating to Salvation; do still bring in Christ as the Person principally concern'd about it.

Tit. 3. 6

Rom. 5. 18, 19.

Salvation (indeed) is a Gift; it is perfectly Free: yet not to be had, but in Christ: *It comes upon us through His Righteousness. As by One's disobedience many were made sinners: so by the Righteousness of One (by means of their Oneness with Him) shall many be made Righteous.*

Mankind (by their Apostacy in Adam) had destroyed in themselves, the whole of that Principle, which would

would have lead them to God, as their life and blessedness : And had (withal) contracted such an Enmity against Him, and Repugnancy to all Overtures for Returning to Him ; (And this Gulph was so fixed) as would for ever have kept God and us asunder ; had not that blessed Project of *Choosing in Christ* been set on foot to dissolve it. It could not be done by any Created Power ; Nor could Creatures so much as propound a Way for it : And if they could, who durst so harden himself, as to Mention the Thing, which onely 'could do it ! But, The Great God, blessed for ever, He findes out a way for it : And the same Love that ordain'd to Eternal life, would also put it in *such* a way, as should surely take effect : And to this end, (viz. That Those Ordain'd to Salvation, might be both Rightfully *entitled* to that Salvation, and *successfully* brought into it) They were put into Christ by Election : He was the Chief and Eminent Elect One ; The First-born and Prince of the Family ; and all the Elect besides were given to Him (as younger Brethren) to be maintain'd upon His Inheritance.

It is plain to him that reads, That the *whole* of Salvation was laid upon Christ ; That He bears up the Pillars of it ; and that all shoulders else had been too weak : He is both the means and Center, by whom, and in whom, God will have all things gathered together in One : He was made *God with us*, That we might be made One in God ; as appears by the scope of His Prayer in the 17th. of *John*. In Him the Father is well pleased ; and out of Him there is nothing pleasing to God, or good for Men : We are therefore said to be *Chosen* in Him (a) ; To be *Called* in Him (b) ; To be *Created* in Him (c) ; To be *Preserved* in Him (d) ; and in Him to be *blessed* with all *spiritual Blessings*. Blessings in themselves, would not be so to us, if not in Christ ; And being in Him, all things are turned into blessings to us : For, *now* Nothing can come at us, but as coming through Him ; and what ever so comes, is *Tinctured*, by His Divine Excellency, and made *Propitious* to us : And hereby it is, That the Thing we

a Eph 1.4.

b Phil. 3. 14.

c Eph. 2. 10.

d Jude, v. 7. 2.

e Eph. 1. 4.

were

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were Chosen unto; is *effectually* and *unfailably* Provided for.

There may divers good Reasons and Ends be assign'd for God's Choosing the Elect in Christ : As,

Arg. 1. I. That by bringing in Man's Restauration this way, He might (as it were) Baffle His great Adversary*, and Outshoot him in his own Bow : And it well became the Wisdom and Grace of God, *Thus* to do. The devil thought, by Poisoning the Root, to Vitiate and Ruin the whole *Stock* and *Progeny*; and he fail'd not of His Design. The Lord would therefore, by putting His Elect into a Head *unable* of Degeneracy, Retrieve that Ruin; and not only recover them, but bring them into a *Better* Estate than that they had lost : He would set up a *Man*, that should be too hard for the *Devil*; and be able, both to Destroy *Him*, and Dissolve his *Works* : And He hath accordingly done it. In which Method of Man's Recovery, is a great Answerableness to the Method of his Ruin; And it is a Thing, the Lord would have us to mind, as appears by the Parallel beforementioned.

Rom. 3:12-21

Arg. 2. II. That by shewing us His Righteousness in the way and manner of our Recovery; we might the more readily subscribe to His Righteousness in the imputation of *Adam's* sin : For, without the sight and knowledge of the One, we cannot with any heartiness submit to the other. Hence, Some, in their too-bold Arguings against Election, have alledged, That *What Adam did, was without their Consent.*

Arg. 3. III. If the Elect had not been in Christ, the satisfaction He undertook for Sinners, could not have availed them. As *Adam's* sin could not have been ours, if not in him : So neither the Righteousness of Christ, if not in Him : Our sins could not have met upon Him, nor we have been Justified and Reconciled by the blood of His Cross; If He had not sustain'd our persons, and stood in our stead. Another's Act cannot be mine, either as to Profit or loss, if there be not some kind of Oneness between us.

IV. If

IV. If not in Christ, we could not have been Sanctified : The Lump was sanctified in the first fruits ; *Rom. 11. 16.* The *Wilde-Olive-Nature* could not be suppress and changed, but by grafting into the *True*. As a Man cannot be *Naturally born*, Without relation to *Adam* as his *Natural head* : so 'tis impossible to be *born again*, (or *Regenerated*) without the like relation of *Union* to Christ as his *Spiritual Head* : There is no being a *New Creature*, without being in Christ : *They that are joyned unto the Lord* (and they only) *are one Spirit* with Him. *2 Cor. 5. 17.* The branch must be in the Vine, before its sap can be derived into it : He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, must be One ; There must be a *Consistency*, (a touching of Him) before this virtue can come from Him.

V. They were Chosen into Christ, That the Salvation they were Chosen unto, might be invincibly secured ; of which, this putting them into Christ, is a pledge *irrevocable*. Their *Union* with Him, is their *stability* ; It is *That* makes them *bold out* (as He Himself did) till all is finished : He did not fail, nor was discouraged ; so neither shall they ; and this because he is their Head ; This makes them victorious over *all the power of the enemy*. *1 Jo. 4. 14.*

Election, indeed, makes their Salvation *sure* ; but it is by this way of *Putting them into Christ* : In whom the heirs of the World to come are *preserv'd* ; whiles the World of ungodly are *deluged* in Perdition— (*Adam*, therefore, whiles a Common Person, and as such, could not be said to be in Christ : If he had, he could not have fallen :) For, *the Father hath given the Son to have life in Himself*, (i. e. to have it as a Root) That all in Him might still be supplied from an *increated* Grace and Power ; which holds them fast to Himself ; and so, from *Withering* and *falling off*. It is not Grace received by us, that keeps us : But *that Grace which received us to the Glory of God the Father* ; which still Communicates a fresh supply, *Through Jesus Christ*. *Gen. 6. 18.* *Job. 5. 26.* *Rom. 15. 7.*

Having gone these few steps, towards the *Compass* and *extent of Election* ; It concerns us also to know ; where this

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broad River hath its Head : What Rock it is, That this Immenſe Fabrick is built upon : That we may not give the honour of it to another ; nor indanger our ſelves by ſetting on a wrong foundation : To ſhew which is the Scope and Subject of the Sixth particular under this General Head : viz.

VI. That *Election is founded upon Grace* : Or,
The good pleaſure of God's will, is the only Original Cauſe and Motive of Election.

As in Men's Genealogies, there is no ſtop, until you come up to God the Father of all : So is it in the order of Cauſes relating to Men's Salvation : The *efficiency* of all things that are *mediate* and *ſubordinate*, depending on God, as *Fiſt* and *Sovereign* : His *Willing* the futuration of them, is the cauſe of their *being* : and We ſhall never judge Rightly, unleſs we come up to the Will and Good Pleaſure of God, as the Sovereign Rule and Law of His Works : And this, I term, The [only] Original Cauſe of Election, to ſhut out Faith foreſeen, with all the works and worthineſs of Men, from being any way Cauſal, Influential, or Motive thereto, and ſo from ſharing in the Glory of God's Grace ; which He is very jealous of, and will not impart to any.

The *Ground*, or *Moving Cauſe* of God's Election, is quite different from the manner of Men ; who commonly pitch upon things, for ſome *Natural Aptneſs*, or *Meetneſs* of them for their Work : They will not take a knotty, croſs-grain'd, or wind-shaken piece of Timber, to make a Pillar of State : But, the Lord pitches upon ſuch (and ſuch to chooſe) the *poor, baſe, weak, fooliſh*, things of the world ; the worſt of Men, and *chief of Sinners* : (The inſtances of *Paul, Maſſaſeb, Mary Magdalen*, and others, make it evident :) and of theſe, He is pleaſed to make Pillars for the Houſe of God ; (Pillars of State indeed !) whercon to write His own Name ; to manifeſt thereby His Sovereignty, Holineſs, Wiſdome, Power, Righteouſneſs, and Free Grace to Eternity.

The

The Lord's way and method, in bringing His Sons to Glory; is the best Demonstration of the Right order of Causes: For, though there be a Concurrence of many things, as Causes and Effects, one of another; yet if observ'd in their Order, they will still lead us up to the *Good Pleasure of God, as First and Supream; and perfectly Independent*: The Current of the New Testament Runs wholly this way; and hangs the whole of Salvation, both Means and End, expressly on the *Divine Will*: Luke 11. 32, *It is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*: Chap 10. 21, *Thou hast hid these things from the Wise, and revealed them to babes*; For so it seemed good in thy sight: Rom. 11. 5, *A Remnant according to the Election of Grace*: Ephes. 1. 5, *Predestinate to the Adoption of Children, according to the good pleasure of His Will*: Redemption also, and the forgiveness of Sins, according to the riches of His Grace, (the same Grace that Elected.) Ver. 7, *The making known the mystery of His Will*; this also is according to that His Good pleasure, which He had purposed in Himself, Ver. 9. Yea, all the operations of God, whether for us, upon us, or by us, they All have their Rise from the same Spring, and are Carried by the same Rule: *He worketh all things after the Council of His Own Will*; Ver. 11. And for the Old Testament, you have it sufficiently exemplified there, in the Instances before given; and especially touching the ground of God's love, to the People of Israel; (who, in that respect, were the Arch-type of the Spiritual Election) viz. That *His own good pleasure* was the only cause of His Choosing them above other Nations; *He loved them, because He loved them.*

*Deut. 7. 8.
Ch 9. 4.
Ch. 10. 15.*

And good Reasons there are, why Election should be founded upon Grace; and why it could not, with respect either to God's Glory, or the Elect's Security, be founded otherwise. And the

1. Is from the *Sovereignty* of God: Whose Will being the Supream Law, admits not a *Co-ordinacy*; Much less will it stand with Sovereign Power to be *Regulated* by the will of another: That would be a *Contradiction* to Sovereignty;

Rom 9.18.
Eph 1.11.
Rom 9.16.

For, that which Regulates, is *superiour* to that which is regulated by it. Sovereign Princes (to shew their Prerogative) affirm their acts of *Grace*, to be of *their own meer Motion*; And their Grants are reputed the more Authentique for being so exprest. The like we find in Scripture frequently ascribed to God; That *He will have Mercy, on whom He will have mercy*: That *He worketh all things* (not by Motives from without, but) *after the Council of His own Will*: That *it is not of Men's Willing or Running; but of God who sheweth Mercy.*

When the World had been drown'd for their obdurate impenitency; the Few that remain'd, were as bad as before; and those that should come after the Lord foresaw would be the same. One would think, now, The natural Result of this Experiment should be, *I will utterly cut them off, and be troubled with them no more*: But, the Lord's thoughts are not *our* thoughts; He argues and concludes in another Mode; *I will not again any more Curse the ground for man's sake.* And He is pleased to give the same Reason here, why He *Will not*; as before, why He *would*; as is seen, by comparing Gen. 6, 5, and 7. with Chap. 8. 21.

See also the Instance of God's dealing with *Ephraim*; He was *wroth* with Him and *smote* Him; and *Ephraim* so far from *Relenting*, That he went on *forwardly*: (*i. e.* Stubbornly, as Resolved in his Course) *I bid me* (sayes the Lord) *and was wroth*: This, one would think, (if *Ephraim* had in him but a spark of Ingenuity) should have Moved him to alter his Course. But, what cares *Ephraim*? He still keeps the same way; and it was the way of *his heart*; not an *inconsiderate Pet*, or *sudden Temptation*; but *Natural and fixed*: All which the Lord sees and considers; and having laid all together, Resolves to *beat him*, and *Restore Comforts to him.*

Isa. 57.18.
Isa. 50.01.

On the other hand; Those good Soules who feared the Lord and Obeyed the voice of his servant; They yet walked in darkness, and had no light: ye may be sure, They would gladly have understood their Condition, (namely, That they were such as feared the Lord) Their Will could not be Wanting to a Thing so greatly importing their Comfort; Nor
Thy

they were not *Idle* in seeking for it : They *Wa'ked* though in the *Dark* ; but could not Walk themselves *out* of it : They are still as they were, They had no light. By these contrary Examples ye may see, That the *Sovereignty* of God still keeps the *Throne*, and His dispensments of Mercy (whether in purpose or in *Act*) are not Governed by the *Wills* of Men; They are things too low to be Councillors to God. And if it be thus in things of *temprrary* Concernment, much more in that great business of *Eternal Election*; which is the *Sublimest Act* of Sovereign Power. (And yet, This hinders not, but That every Man, at last, shall be judged according to his works.)

II. *Election* must be founded *onely* upon *Grace*, because *Grace* and *Works* are *Inconsistent* in the *Cause* of salvation. The Scripture is *every* Cautelous of admitting any thing as a Concomitant with *Grace*, in this Matter; yea, although it be a Thing that doth alway *accompany* *Grace*, and *That* without which a Man cannot be Saved : The Apostle puts them in opposition, and is very intent on the Argument, as a thing of great Moment, in *Rom. 11.* Where, first he shews, That amidst that general Defection of the Jewish Nation, there still was a Remnant whom God had Reserv'd : These he terms, *The Foreknown*, ver 2. and in the 7. ver. he calls them plainly, *The Election*: And then, lest any should ascribe it to a false cause, (as in that paralel Case he resembles it to,) viz, That *they had not bowed the knee to Baal* ; but stuck to the True Religion, when others fell off ; he tells us, No ; Their Election was founded upon *Grace* : And as for *Works* they had no place in the *Causality* of it. By *Grace* he means, the Free Favour of God ; who is not moved by any thing without Himself ; But what He does, He does it Freely ; without respect to Mens desert ; Nay, their *Undesert* rather, is an expedient Consideration in this Act of Grace. By, *Works*, I understand All that Self-Righteousness, Goodness, Conformity to the Law, Or what ever else is performable by Men. These (viz, *Grace* and *Works*) he proves as inconsistent as Contraries can be ; and that the *least Mixture* would vary the kind. If but a *scruple* of Works be taken in, *Grace* is

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Rom. 4.4.

no more Grace; For, to him that worketh, is the Reward not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt; Rom. 4.4. Grace and Faith, are well agreed: These both have the same scope and end: But, Grace and Works have always Clash'd: The setting up of the One, is the deposing of the other: Either the Ark must Out, or Dagon down; One Temple cannot hold them both. Rom. 3. 28.

Gal. 5.2.

To the same effect is the drift of that discourse in Gal. 5. It appears from Acts 15. 1. That some there were, who taught a Necessity of Circumcision; as without which they could not be saved: Pretty willing they were to admit of Christ, so they might joyn Circumcision with Him, and keeping the Law of Moses. But, this dangerous daubing with things unmixable, our holy Apostle could not brook; both as reflecting on the honour of his Master, and undermining their only Foundation: And therefore, to keep them from, or bring them off, that perillous Quick-sand; he tells them expressly, These two cannot stand together in that matter: For, if they be Circumcised, they are Debtors to the whole Law; and Christ is become of none effect to them; because they are fallen from Grace. It is, as if he had said, If you take in any part, though never so little of Legal Observances, as Necessary to your being Justified, ye forfeit the whole benefit of Gospel-Grace. The Grace of Christ is sufficient for you; He is a Saviour Compleat in Himself; and if you look (though but a squint) at any thing else; it is a Renouncing of Him: He will be Saviour altogether or not at all. And therefore he tells them again, and that with a kind of vehemency; That if they be Circumcised, Christ shall profit them Nothing.

And as a Man may not put in his Claim for Justification on account of his Works; so neither of his Faith, as if That were Materially or Influentially Causal of Justification: For, Faith it self, as it is the Believers Act, comes under the Notion of a Work. Let us therefore Consider, What part it is that Faith holds in this Matter: least whiles we cast out Works, as not standing with Grace; we make a Work of Faith. It is Faith's Office, to make the Soul live wholly on

And

Another ; and to Renounce Self-ability, as much as Self-desert : To apprehend that Righteousness by which Grace Justifies ; Not onely to be justified thereby upon your Believing ; but to work in you even that Faith, by which you apprehend it ; answerable to that of the Prophet, *In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength.* He that will be Saved must come as an *ungodly* Person to be justified freely by the Grace of God : He must reckon himself an *Ungodly* Man, to the very instant of his Justification. True it is, The Just shall live by Faith ; but 'tis also true, That it is not *their own Faith*, or act of believing, that they live by, (though not without it :) Which also seems the Apostle's meaning, where he sayes, *The life, which I now live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God :* Where note, That as Faith is the life of a Believer ; so Christ is the life of his Faith ; *I live* (saith he) *yet not I but Christ liveth in Me :* Christ was his life ; and he lived on Christ, by virtue of Christ's living in him. 1 Jn. 4. 5. 24.

Notwithstanding all which, it is evidently true, and must constantly be affirm'd, That *Grace* and *Works* will still be together in the way of Salvation ; (the one doth not extinguish or exclude the other) Only not as *Collegues* or *Joint-Causers* thereof : But rather as a *Workman*, and his *Tool*, which himself first makes, and then workes with them ; By *Grace* ye are saved through Faith ; and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God : Even this believing or Acting faculty is a Creature of Grace's raising up ; and therefore, in the *Throne* 'tis meet that Grace should be above it. Works (therefore) how good soever, are not the Cause of *Salvation* ; and if so, then not the cause of *Election* ; for *This* (indeed) is the Cause of them both : And Works (if right and truly Good) will always be ready to own their Original, and to keep in their own place ; Where also they will be most considerable, and do the best service. Eph. 2. 8.

III. That the good pleasure of God's Will, gives Rise and Foundation to Election, is further argued from Men's Incapacity to afford any ground or Motive to God, for such a Gift. *Adam* stood not so long as to beget a Son in his first

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first Image : It is seen by his first-born *Cain* , what all his natural Seed would naturally be. And though there be some that do Magnifie Man, and presume to speak of him at another rate : yet evident it is by Scripture-light, and experience of those Renewed ; That Man *fallen* is *poor*, blind, Naked, and at enmity with all that is truly good : and that he is never more Remote and farr off from God , than whiles in high thoughts of himselfe, Glorifying in his own Understanding, Strength , Worthyness , Freedom of Will, Improvement of Common Grace, and the like : For, These make him proud and presumptuous, and to have slight thoughts of that *special* and *peculiar* Grace by which he must (if ever) be Renewed and Saved. But, the Lord Himself (who best knows him) reports the matter quite otherwise ; (and we know that His witness is true) viz. That all the imaginations of their heart are onely evil continually : That their inward part is very wickedness : That every Man is brutish in his knowledge : Altogether brutish and foolish ; yea, even their Pastours ; (that is, the very best and most intelligent amongst them :) They are wise to do evil, but to do good have no understanding : And their hearts are full of madness : —

Gen. 6 5.
Ps. 53. 1.
Jer 10 14
ver. 8, 21.

Ch 4. 22.
Eccles. 9: 3.

And it was not thus only with the *Gentile Nations*, who were left to walk in their own way ; but even with the *Jews*, who had all the means of becoming better that could be devised, (Excepting that of special Electing Grace, which took in but a Remnant :) They were called *Jews*, Rested in the Law, Made their boast of God, Knew His Will, Approved the things that were excellent ; Were confident that they were a Guide of the blind, and a light to them that were in darkness, Instructors of the foolish, Teachers of Babes, — And yet all this while, and in the midst of all these high attainments, did not teach Themselves : Rom. 2 from 17 ver. to 21.

Isa. 5. 4.

And in Rom. 3. where they are Ranked together, he proves them to be *All under Sin*, *None Righteous*, *None that understandeth*, *None that seeketh after God*, *None that doth good*, [No not One] Yea, This depravement of Nature was so deep and indelibly fixed, That the Lord Himselfe tells them The

Blackmoor

Blackmoor might as soon change his skin, as they learn to do well. All which, with abundantly more, bespeaks a condition extremely remote from yielding a Cause of this blessed Election.

IV. If God's love to Men had its *Rise* and *Beginning* from their love to Him, it would not have that *singular eminency* in it, that is justly ascribed to it : [*So God loved the World—!*] So as not to be exprest; So as not to be parallel'd; So as not to be understood, until we come to that State wherein we shall *know as we are known*. By this it is, that God's love to Men is so highly celebrated, in *1 Joh. 4. 10.* [*Herein*] is love; Not that we loved God, but that God loved us. And, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us ! Which surely then is not after the manner of Men; For, even *Publicans* do so; and *Sinners* love those that love them : But, to love *Enemies*, and *whiles* *Enemies*; (as to love a Woman, (a Wife) that is an *Adulteress*) this is according to God's love to His Chosen. *1 Cor. 13. 12.* *1 Joh. 3. 1.* *Math. 6. 46.* *Luke. 6. 32, 35.*

But, Notwithstanding these Scriptures (with others) seem purposely written to obviate such conceptions as would feign our loving of God, to be the ground and Motive of His love to us : Yet, great endeavours there are to Father Election upon *foreseen faith and works*, which That They call the Covenant of Grace, has (they Say) qualified and capacitated all Men for; and which certain more *pliant*, *ingenuous*, and *industrious* persons (as they speak) would attain unto, by the helps they have in common with other Men : But, this pedigree of Election is excepted against as being not rightly deduced : For,

1. Men having (in *Adam*) devoted themselves of all that was holy and good; the Lord could not foresee in them any thing of *Worth* or *Desirableness*, but what Himself should work in them *Anew*, and that of *pure* Grace and favour : For, sin and deformity could not be motives of love; And, that the Elect (of themselves) were in no wise better than other Men, is evident

by the Scriptures late-quoted ; where the Hely Ghost asserting the universal depravement of humane nature, exempts *not one*. But, if such excellent and distinguishing qualifications as *Faith* and *Holiness* had been *foreseen*, (and so, *imputable* to them) the Spirit of Truth would not have Rank'd them *Even* with the *Children of wrath*, as He doth, Eph. 2. 3. But,

Job 37. 24.
Ch. 35. 7.
Ch. 41. 11.

Deut. 10. 17

2. If they were otherwise, what could they add unto God ? Or whereby could they oblige Him ? He *respecteth not any that are wise of heart*. If thou be *Righteous*, what givest thou Him ? And who hath prevented Me (says the Lord) that I should repay him ? (i.e. Who is he that is a *fore hand* with God, in doing ought that might induce His favour ?) He *regardeth not persons*, nor *taketh Rewards*. He is not propitious to any for what they can do for Him, or bring to Him. '

Take *Paul* for an Instance : He walked up to the light he had ; Was blameless ; lived in all good Conscience ; knew no evil by himself ; (a rare degree of legal Righteousness !) But, that it was not *this* moved God to make him a *Chosen Vessel*, he thankfully acknowledgeth, with self-abasement, upon every occasion : *Tit. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 14. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 9.*

3. Faith follows Election : God respects the person before his offering. (you'll say perhaps) *Abel* was respected as a *Believer*, and his offering for his Faith ? True, But that Faith of his was not the *primary cause* of God's respecting him. If *Abel's* Person had not been respected *first*, he had never been a Believer : For, Faith is the *work* and *gift* of God ; and (according to the course of all judicious Agents) he that will work, must first pitch on the *Subject* He will work upon ; and he that gives, on the person he will give unto. Besides, *Abel* could do nothing *before* he Believed, that might move God to give him Faith : therefore it could not be *Abel's foreseen Faith* that was the *Cause* of his Election. The Scripture speaks often of *iron-sinew'd-Necks*, and *Brazen Brims* ; and of *Men's being in their blood*, when the Lord said *They should live* : As also that God loved *Jacob* before he had done any good thing ; and that the Saints love God

Heb. 11. 6.
Rom. 14. 23.

God because He loved them first : But no-where of Foreseen Faith and Holiness as the Cause and Ground of God's love to Men.

4. Faith and Holiness are *Middle* things : They are neither the *Foundation* nor *Top-stone* of Election. They are to Sovereign Grace, as Stalks and Branches are to a Root ; by which the Root conveys its virtues into its principal fruit: *Ephes. 2. 8, By Grace ye are saved [through] Faith : 2 Thes. 2. 13, Chosen to Salvation [through] Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth.* They are no more the Cause of Election, than the Means of an End are the first Cause of Purpose : Nay, no more than *Tatnai's* propension to build the Temple, and to provide Sacrifices for the God of Heaven, was the Cause of *Darius's* Decree that those things should be done, *Ezra 5. and 6. Chapters.*

5. If men be Predestinate to Faith and Holiness, (as they are) according to *Rom. 8. 38, 39. and 1 Pet. 1. 2.* Then they were not seen to be such before their Predestination : Or if they were, then their Election (as to that particular) would seem impertinent : There can no Rational account be given, why Men foreseen to be such, should be so solemnly predestinate thereto. So likewise, If Salvation be the inseparable product of Faith and Holiness, according to *John 5. 24, He that believeth [hath] everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation : 1 Pet. 1. 9. Receiving the End of your Faith, the Salvation of your Souls :* Then, to ordain to Salvation those foreseen to be so qualified, would seem a thing both needless and insignificant : It would look like the sending of Men where they would have gon of Themselves.

Such senseless, irregular, and injudicious Notions are very unworthy that Celebrious and for ever Adorable Act of Predestination. And if duely weighed, would set us further off from the doctrine of Self-advancement, which stands in so point-blank opposition to the Doctrine of God's Grace.

V. It could not stand with the wisdom and Goodness of God, to found the Salvation of His People on a *failable* bottom : Which it must be said to be, if dependent on any

Nof. 6. 4.

thing besides *His own Immutable Will* : For, whatever it was, that Election had *being* from, by that alfo it must be *maintain'd*. What then would become of it, if built on that goodness which is as the *Morning cloud* and *early dew* ? The Creature's will, even whiles in a state of perfection, was too flight and fickle a thing to build this eternal weight upon : And if Man at his *best* estate was vanity, how much more *afterwards*, when so strong a Bent to vanity came upon his will !

VI. Lastly, To derive Election from *any* Root besides the *Good pleasure of God*, is to frustrate the principal End of Man's Salvation, *viz.* the *Glory of God's Grace*, Ephes. 1. 6. and Chap. 2. 7. This Attribute (of all the Rest) He will not have ecclipsed, nor intrench'd upon : 'Tis to *Divinely* sacred, as not to admit the least *humane* touch. For which very cause, the Lord hath so contrived that blessed design and Plot of His Glory, that *all boasting* is excluded : *And no flesh shall Glory in His presence*. But if any thing in the Creature be intitled to the *Causality* of Election, *Flesh* will Glory ; and instead of excluding *Man's* Boasting, *Grace* it self will be excluded, (which is far from a Glorifying of it) as is plain from, *Rom. 11. 6*.

I would here Resolve a *Quere* or two, which some have urged from the Scripture, As

1. *How can this Doctrine stand with the [General] love and good will of God towards Men ; who ('tis said) will have all to be saved ?* 1 Tim. 2. 4.

In General ; the *literal* sense of words is not to be rested on, when the like phrase of speech elsewhere used, or evident scope of the same or other Scripture, agrees not to it : The design and current of the *whole* must guide the construction of *particular parts*. More particularly :

1. Though the Doctrine of *General Love* will not stand with that of *Special Election* ; yet the Doctrine of *Special Election* will stand without That, and against it : For, there is nothing more plain, than that there is an *Election* of men to
Salva-

Salvation; as also, That the natural Import of Election, is, To Choose One or more out of Many: Now this necessarily implies the Leaving of Some; and consequently, The Not-willing of Salvation to All: For,

2. The Will of God cannot be resisted: What He wills shall come to pass, because with His willing the End, He Wills also the Means; and that such as shall compass His End: *Isa. 46. 10, My counsel shall stand, I will do all my pleasures; i. e. What I please to will, That I will have done.*

3. If the word [All] be here taken universally, it takes in Unbelievers as well as Others; as if God would have them to be Saved: And if you will explain this by other Scriptures; (as, namely, If they do believe) These also must be considered with those that shew How and by Whom that Faith must be wrought; and who they are it belongs unto: and they tell us, That Faith is the Gift and operation of God, *Coll. 2. 12. Eph. 2. 8.* And That Election is that which intitles to Faith; *Rom. 11. 7.*

4. The Apostle is not here discoursing the Extent of God's special love; Whether All Men universally are concern'd in it: but exhorting Believers to a General duty; viz. To give thanks for Kings, and all in Authority; because of the benefits we have by Government: And to pray for them; Not onely for their peaceable governing of us; but if otherwise, that God would turn their hearts, and make them Nursing Fathers to His Church. And to enforce the Duty, There is no degree nor state of Men exempted from Salvation: God hath chosen some of every sort; and therefore we ought not to shut any out of our prayers.

5. The word [All] is often used, when but a part (and sometimes, the lesser part) of the thing spoken of, is intended by it. As on the contrary, when the Universality of the subject is intended, it is expressed by Singulars; As, He that believeth shall be Saved; and Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. It sometimes signifies All of such a sort: so Eve is said to be the Mother of All Living; Not of all Living Creatures, but all of her own kind. It other

times intends *Some of all Sorts* : as where it is said All the Cattle of *Egypt* died, *Exod. 9. 6.* And the hail smote every tree, and every herb, ver. 25. And yet other Cattle are mentioned after, and a Residue of Trees are said to be escaped, ver. 19. 25. and *Chap. 10. 5.* So here, *God will have all Men to be saved* ; That is, *Some of every Sort and degree* ; Gentiles as well as Jews ; Kings and Men in authority, as well as those of a meaner Rank. The same in *Joel* ; *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh* : that is, upon some of every Age, Sex, and Degree, without distinction ; Young, Old, Masters, Servants, Sons, Daughters, &c. as it follows there.

Joel 2. 28.

6. To these Universal terms do belong divers Restrictions, which must be gather'd from the Scope ; *Col. 1. 23.* The Gospel is said, to be preached to every Creature under Heaven : and yet *Men* only are intended ; and not *All* of them neither ; For the Gospel had reached but a small part of the World at that time, and not the *whole* of it yet. *Acts 15. 21.* *Moses* hath in every City them that preach him : It must be understood only of Cities where the *Jews* dwelt and had Synagogues ; which were but few in comparison. *Acts 8. 4.* They that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the Word ; i. e. They balked no place nor person ; but preached where ever they came : At first it was confin'd to the *Jews*, but now without limits. *1 Cor. 4. 5.* Every Man shall have praise of God : It can be meant only of Good and Faithful Servants, which are but a Remnant to the whole piece. *Eph. 4. 5.* God is said to be the Father of *all* ; and yet, Satan (we know) is the Father of the far greater part of the World. *Col. 1. 20.* Christ is said to Reconcile *all* things ; and yet, all the Angels (which are Things, and of the Chiefest of Things) must be exempted : The Good Angels, because they never were at enmity : and the evil Angels, because Not Reconcilable. *Eph. 1. 10.* That He might gather together in One *all* things in Christ : This [All things] seems plainly to intend the *Elect* ; for they are the subject discoursed of in the whole Chapter : and in *Matthew*, Those gathered together are

are stiled *The Elect*, Mat. 24. 31. In Heb. 12. 8, *All* are said to be partakers of Chastisement : and yet it can be meant only of Sons; for Bastards are not partakers of it; as it follows there. So also, *John* 6. 41, They shall be *all* taught of God : It respects only the Sons of the Church, (i. e. such as are *Elected*) whose iniquities are forgiven them, and their sins remembered no more : It is the tenour of the New Covenant, which is made with the House of *Israel*; that is, *Jews* in Spirit, or the *Elect Nation*, Heb. 8. 10, 11. Jer. 31. 34. And if these terms *Universal* [*All* and *Every*] are sometimes applied to the *Elect* exclusive of Others; why not as well in the place whence the *Quere* is taken?

I have instanced these, to shew what *Contradictory* Notions would follow, should the *vocal sound* of words be adhered to : What a *Sandy* foundation *Universal-Election* is built upon : And how likely we are to lose the Truth, whiles we listen to an uncertain sound; the meaning whereof may yet be had from the Context, and General Current of the Scripture.

2. *How shall this kind of Election be reconciled with Acts 10. That God is no Respector of persons ?*

1. This shews the inconvenience of Minding the *literal sense* of words above the *Scope* : The former Exception *takes-in* All; and now This *excludes* All : for, if literally taken, God should have respect to None. 2. The *Jews* were an *Elect Nation*; and so, this objection will lye against that Election as much as this we are upon. 3. The scope of the place plainly intends, That God respects no Man's person either less or more, for his outward condition, or Carnal privileges. Till *Then*, the partition was up, and the Lord seemed to Regard only the Jewish Nation; suffering All besides, to *Walk in their own Wayes*, Acts 14. 16. But *Now* had God to the *Gentiles* also granted Repentance unto life, Acts 11. 18. You'l say, They were *Fearers of God* whom He thus accepted? True; but *That* was not it which firstly induced His Acceptance, or intit'led them to it; (although it

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it was their Evidence for it.) If Men fear not God till He hath put His fear within them; Then, their fearing Him, doth not precede His Respect towards them, but follows upon it. And this is the Favour which he bears to His Chosen, *Psal.* 106. 4.

Job. 15, 16.

3. *If Men be ordained to Salvation absolutely, What need or use is there of good works?*

There are divers good Uses and Ends of good works, and good Reasons for God's ordaining them to be walked in; without supposing our Walking in them, the Ground, Condition, or Motive of our Election: As

1. To shew forth His virtues whose Off-spring we profess our selves to be: *Mat.* 5. 45, *That ye may be (i.e. that ye may appear and approve your selves to be) the Children of your Father which is in Heaven.*

2. To Convince Those without; That they by our good conversation may be won over, and learn to do well; Or else be compelled to Glorifie God in the day of visitation.

3. For Encouragement and Example to Weaker Christians; who yet are but Children in the good wayes of God, and are aptlier led by Example than Precept.

4. That by having our Senses exercised about holy things, we might become more holy; and so, more capable of Communion with God here, and meetened for our Heavenly Inheritance.

5. Good works are a part of Election; and the Elect are as absolutely ordained to them, as to Salvation it self, *Job.* 15. 16.

Objections I did not intend to meddle with: But considering that *That* which follows of this kind, (though done for another account) may help to discover the lightness of what is alledged against our Doctrine of Election, I have therefore inserted it here; And hope it shall prove to its further Confirmation.

There

There is no Election, nor Decree of Election, of particular persons as such ; but of the intire species of Men from Eternity ?

Election is the Choosing of *Some* from among others ; and it alwayes suppoſeth a greater Number out of which the choice is made : And conſequently, The taking (or Choosing) of *All*, is quite beſides the nature of Election. The Scripture ſayes, They are choſen *out* of the World, *Joh. 15. 19.* Then the World is not Choſen : *i. e.* The intire Species of Men is not the object of Election.

God hath not decreed from Eternity to Eleſt any perſon of Mankind upon any terms, but that in caſe he liveth to years of diſcretion, he may poſſibly periſh ?

This is excepted againſt, 1. Becauſe the perſon of Chriſt Himſelf is not exempted : 2. Becauſe as poſſibly the death of Chriſt might be in vain : 3. It makes the *Decree* and *Election* two things, and divers in reſpect of time. That Election was from Eternity, is proved from *Eph. 1. 4.* And that the Eleſt ſhall not periſh, is abſolutely promiſed, *John 1 c. 28.*

Threatnings of Damnation are abſolutely inconfiſtent with a peremptory Decree to conſerr Salvation ?

No more then the threatning of death upon *Adam*, was inconfiſtent with God's purpoſe to ſend him a Saviour : So likewiſe, that Caution [That *Except the Mariners ſtay- ed in the ſhip, they could not be Saved*] was well conſiſtent with that peremptory Promiſe [*That there ſhould be no loſs of any Man's life.*] The Promiſe of ſafety was *abſolute* ; but their actual obtainment of it was *Conditional* : Yet ſo, as That the *performance* of the Condition on their part, was as *Certain* by the Decree, as *Safety* upon their performance of it : For, He that determin'd the ſafety of their lives, Determin'd alſo That it ſhould be *Effected* by their abiding in the Ship ; and That this Caution, or threatning of danger, in caſe they went out ; ſhould be a means to prevail with them for that abiding ; and ſo it did.

Gen. 2. 17.
with
Ch. 3. 15.
AB. 27. 32.
with. v. 31.

In like manner, that saying of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye walk after the flesh, ye shall die*; was very consistent with what he had said afore in Chap. 6. 14, *That Sin shall not have dominion over them*: and That *Nothing should separate them from the love of God*, Chap. 8. 39. For, as the Lord deals with reasonable Creatures; So He makes use of Rational Arguments, Motives, and Cautions to work upon them: Both End and Means, and Incentives to the use of those Means, were all determin'd together.

We judge it a very senseless part in a father, to give his child compleat assurance under band and Seal, that he will make him his heir against all possible interferences; and yet presently threaten him, if he be not dutiful, to disinherit him?

Undutiful Children may dare to judge thus of their Fathers actions: and Children (that otherwise are dutiful and good, yet) whiles Children, may have Childish conceptions of what their Ancients do: But Men grown up, and acquainted with their Fathers prudence and goodness, will lay their hand upon their mouth.

The promise and purpose of God to give Canaan to Abraham's seed; was so absolute, That (by the Objectors own confession) all their unworthyness would not deprive them of it: It is also evident by their demeanour, and the Event at last: yet, how often does the Lord threaten to disinherit them? and to blot out their name from under Heaven? Did Moses, now, go and charge God foolishly? Did he tell Him, 'Tis a senseless part thus to threaten after so absolute an engagement to the contrary? No, he puts the Lord in mind of His promise to their Fathers; Of His Mercy in pardoning them aforesaid; what reflection it would have on His honour among the Egyptians, If He should now destroy them: &c. Not a word of Complaint, That first to Promise, and then to threaten, is a senseless thing: It had been senseless in Moses thus to do, and in no wise consistent with His duty: But more directly:

It were no senseless part in a Father, to purchase an Office for

Exod. 32. Ye.
Num. 14. 12.
Deut. 9. 24.

for his Son, and so to settle it on him; that it shall not be in his own power to Reverse it: And yet, (keeping to himself the knowledge of that Settlement) propose the enjoyment thereof conditionally, viz. upon terms of obedience to his fathers Commands; The tendency of all which, is but to prove himself the Son of such a father, and to Meeten him for his place: And the more to oblige his Son to a studious preparing himself for it; to lay before him the evil and danger of a Negligent course; by which (if persisted in) he might render himself incapable.

But surely, supposing this Father to have the same power over his Son, as God hath over the heart and Spirit of His people; He will so order him by Instruction, discipline, and good principles; that he shall not run into a Forfeiture.

Besides, Threatnings of Damnation are not properly applicable to Believers, who know themselves so to be: For *he that believeth, is passed from death to life, and shall not come into Condemnation*: However, at times, for want of a thorough knowing their State, unthankfulness for it, or some other miscarriage; they bring themselves under doublings of it. But for such as have Compleat assurance under God's hand and seal, (as the Objection speaks) They are sealed up to the Day of Redemption, with a Seal that *never shall be loosed.* Job. 5. 24.
Eph. 4. 30.
Rom. 8. 15.

In case any person were so adjudged to Eternal life from Eternity, that there is no possibility of misarrying; when there was no necessity of Christs dying for him?

The Assertors of Absolute Election do hold with the Scriptures, That Election is *in and through Christ*: The same Decree that ordained to Salvation, ordained also the death of Christ, in order thereto; That God might be *Just in Justifying*: He hath appointed us to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thes. 5. 9, 10. It might be inferr'd, with as much shew of Reason, That if such an End be appointed to be wrought by such a Means, then that Means is unnecessary to that end: That if God hath Chosen Men to salvation *through Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth*,

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then holiness and faith are Needless things : These are absurd reasonings, which the Truth never Owns.

We judge such an Election to be an open Enemy to Godliness, For who will strain and toil himself for that which he knows he shall obtain by an easie pace ?

The Doctrine of *Conditional Election* can be no friend to Godliness, whatever it may pretend ; since all that a Man doth on that account, ultimately ends in self. *Godliness* is to *Aim at God* as our Chief End, in all that we do : Now, One that holds, the Elect sure of Salvation, and believes himself to be one of them, and yet goes on to fear God and obey Him ; Glorifies God more than he that performs the same duties for kind, (and perhaps, greater in bulk) in expectation of life thereby. The Pharisees fasted oftner than Christ's Disciples ; but were not such real friends to Godliness as they : Long prayers, fastings, and Alms-deeds, are all Nothing without Love : and who (do you think) will Love God more, he that believes himself sure of God's Love unchangeably ; or One that holds, That after all his toiling and straining, he may possibly have Run in vain, and lose all at last ? And who would think, that a Master in *Israel* should Reason so absurdly ? who counts it a toil to eat his Meat when Nature requires it ; especially when 'tis most agreeable both to his palate and constitution ? All the wayes of God are pleasantness to them that walk in them ; And these would not leave them again, although their future happiness were not concerned in it : If they be grievous to any, it is from their unacquaintedness with *His Love* ; *1 John 5. 3.*

It must needs make men very remiss and loose in the Service of God.

Christ knew, that the *Angels* had charge over Him ; and that He should not dash His foot against a stone ; yet ne'r the less careful of His own preservation : Paul was sure of the *Crown of Righteousness* ; and yet as diligent in beating down his body, and strain'd as hard in *Running his Race*, as any of those, who lay the stress of Salvation upon their works. *Such*

Such a Notion of Election, layes the honour and necessity of that great Ordinance of Preaching the Gospel, in the dust: For, if the Elect (so called) shall as certainly be saved by a weak, simple, or Corrupt Ministry, and this (it may be) enjoyed but a day or two in all a Mans life, or loosely attended upon, wherein is the Ministry of the Gospel to be esteemed?

That peremptory Decree, That [*Summer and Winter, Gen 8. 22. Day and Night, shall not cease;*] takes not away the Necessity of the Sun's being in the World, Nor of its daily Risings, Settings, and various Revolutions: For, by *these* (as the Necessary Means thereof) must the Decree be made good. So, The Absoluteness of that other part of the promise, (*That Seed time and Harvest shall not cease*) doth no whit discharge the Husbandman either of his usefulness or duty; but evinceth the One and inforceth the Other; Giving also Encouragement to him in his Work.

The force of this Answer will not be evaded by alledging, That God affords them Means proper and sufficient for seed time and harvest; (that is, they have fitting Seasons, with Seed-corn, horses, plows, and other Utensils of husbandry) and that's all the Promise intends; and if they improve them not, the fault's their own: True, it is so; and they shall smart for their Neglect: But what will become of the Promise, and Sureness of the Covenant? Therefore, this is not All that God doth for Men in this point: He that Decreed How long the Earth shall endure, and *what number* of Men He will raise up upon it; Did also Decree His own upholding thereof, during that time, and by *what Means* those Men should be propagated and kept alive; and did accordingly put into Mankind, the Principles of Self-preservation; by which they are *Naturally* prompted to the use of them, as they are to Eat, Drink, and Sleep: *He hath set the World in their heart.* Eccles. 3. 11.

As the Elect shall certainly be *saved*, and also *prepared* for that Salvation; so hath the Lord appointed them *such a Ministry*, and for so long a time, and their attendance there-

on, in *such* manner, as best agreeth to His Own intent; and which He will bless and make *effectual* for that End: As is seen in His sending *Paul* to certain places, where he must *preach* and *not hold his peace*; Why? because *God had much People in that City: i. e. Many of His Elect Ones* were there; who must be brought in by *Paul's* Ministry: *Bythunia* and other places, he is not suffered to go into, though he would; God had not yet any Work for him there.

Those that are to be taken, the Lord will bring under the Means (as He did that Shoal of Fishes under *Peter's* Net, Witness the *Eunuch*, *Cornelius*, the Jailour, and others) And this Means whether *Powerful* or *Simple* in Men's esteem, 'tis all one to God; His word shall accomplish That He sends it for: and the *weaker* the Means are, the more is the *Power* of God magnified: See *Acts* 2. How by *Illiterate* Mens Ministry, He took them by *thousands*, and added to His Church *daily*, such as should be saved. So then, the Ministry of the Gospel is in no wise made useless or disesteemable by the doctrine of *Absolute Election*; but is rather Greatened thereby, as being the Power of God to that Salvation He hath Chosen us to.

Joh 21. 6.

Ab. 2. 9 10, 11,
41, 47.

Of what great consequence to the World, are the Richest Gifts of Wisdom, Knowledge, Utterance, &c. if all those who are in any possibility of being saved by them; may and shall as certainly be saved without them?

That the Richest gifts of Wisdom, Knowledge, Utterance, are of no great consequence to the World, is no Consequent of the Doctrine of *Absolute Election*; For, They are given for the *Perfecting of the Saints*, and *edifying the Body of Christ*; (that is, *The Elect*;) And all the diversities of Gifts, Manifestations, and Operations, do concur to the same End; Since it is the same God, who Worketh all in all; (that is) He appoints Men to Salvation; These Gifts, as a Means to prepare them for it; and Makes them *Effectual* thereto.

But, that these richest Gifts of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Utterance, are of no great use or consequence to the World;

world; is a very *normal* Consequent of that Doctrine, which tells the World, that the Sun, Moon, and Stars do preach the Gospel sufficiently for Salvation: Which, if they do, wherein (indeed) are those Richest Gifts to be esteemed? And to what end is this waste? Why should the best of Men suffer Stripes, Imprisonments, and Death, for doing That which might be done by those above the reach of danger? And withal, 'tis too well known and obvious, That Men of greatest Knowledge, Utterance, and depth of Reason, (such as are filled the Princes of this World) They are not alwaies, (Nay, very rarely) the fastest Friends of Truth and Godliness: And those Few that are, are not alwaies most successful in their work; Eccles. 9. 11. When as Some others, meanly furnished in comparison, have Turned the World upside-down. The Lord oft-times rejects the Wise and Prudent, and reveals himself by Babes; To take from men, occasion of boasting; and to make it appear, that the Faith of His People doth not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but Power of God.

2 Cor. 10. 10.
with
AAs 17. 6.
1 Cor. 2. 5.

Upon what account can Men be pressed to a frequent, diligent, conscientious, attendance on the Ministry; if Salvation, and consequently Perseverance, and Meekness for Salvation, shall as certainly be had by a broken, careless, superficial, attendance in this kind?

On what account did the Lord so frequently admonish that People, To keep the Law without turning aside; To Circumcise their hearts; and to be no more stiff-necked; and this, as the Condition of their obtaining Canaan; if all their unworthyness could not deprive them of Canaan? (which, the Author of this Objection elsewhere affirms, it could not) But further; As Men are Creatures, it is their duty to serve and honour God; and in order thereto, to wait upon Him in His Ordinances, and that with all diligence; although the business of their Salvation were not concerned in it; but much more since it is, if any thing of Self-Concern, may enforce a Duty: And truly the present sweetness, that is in the wayes of God, is Argument sufficient

sufficient to induce our most serious attendance thereon.

But, that Salvation, or Meetness for Salvation, may as certainly be had by a careless Attendance; is far from the Doctrine of *Absolute Election* to Assert: For, it presseth it still, as an important duty, to *give all diligence to make our Calling and Election sure*. But really, Remissness in duty, is the natural result of that Doctrine which teacheth, That a Man possibly may lose all he hath run-for at the last step: For, who will strain and toil himself (as they term it) for an uncertainty? And if there be any such, who neglect their duty, because if *Elected* they are sure to be saved; they give but a sorry evidence of their state: And they are (commonly) such as most eagerly oppose the Doctrine of Election; and not of those who hold for it.

Such an Election as we contend against, we judge to be most unworthy the most excellent Nature of God; and to be at manifest defiance with His Wisdom, Holiness, Mercy, Justice, &c.

If the Election contended against, be such as the Objectors Arguments are pointed at; It is such as (I suppose) was never held by any: And then, 'tis ill-spent time to set up Counterfeit Notions, and make a great business of confuting them.

But it is *Absolute Election*, without respect to Mens Works, that is striven against: And for this, we say

1. *Absolute Election* is no way *contrary* to the wisdom of God, but most *consonant* thereto; For, how can it stand with His Wisdom, to *determine* the death of His Son for the Salvation of Men; and leave it *undetermin'd* (and consequently *uncertain*) whether any one person shall have Salvation by it?

2. It is so far from being at manifest defiance with the Mercy of God; that it is most congruous and suitable to the very nature of it. To shew Mercy, is To open the heart to one in distress; To love and do good to Enemies, whom he might as justly have destroyed, and was no way oblig'd to spare, much less to advance them: Nay, perhaps they
were

were deeper involv'd in guilt than other Men, even the *Chief of sinners* : which is sure the *highest illustration* of Mercy, and farr from a *manifest defiance* with it.

3. It doth not oppose the *Justice* of God ; For, to whom is He Debtor, or can be? *All* had a stock in *Adam* ; and having lost it by their own default, God is not obliged to Restore it ; Therefore, no Injustice to Repair One, and not Another.

Doth it argue any Sovereign or high strain of Grace, when Ten Thousand have equally offended, to pardon one or two ; and implacably resolve to punish and torment all the Rest to the utmost extremity ? And this against all possible interveniency of Sorrow and Repentance for their fault ?

It were very desirable, that men, whiles they suppose to contend for the Grace of God, would so order their words as becomes the gravity of such a Subject : And much more that they come not so near to a Down-right reproaching that Glorious Grace ; of which we cannot have apprehensions awfull enough. The men who thus speak, had need to try their spirits, whether they be of God, Since from the same premisses they draw Conclusions quite contrary to Those who (we know) spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In Scripture account 'tis no derogation to the Grace of God, that He called *Abraham alone* ; leaving *Millions* besides to their perishing condition. Nor can I believe that *Moses* understood it a *Disparaging* of God's love to Mankind, when he tells us, That He chose that Nation *alone* for His own peculiars, who yet were the *Fewest* of any People. *One of a City*, and *two of a Family*, were less in proportion than One or Two of Ten Thousand ; yet no complaint upon it, by *those interess'd in that Grace*. It's the property of God's Children to admire that He loves any, and especially *themselves* ; and not to find fault because He loves not *All alike*. Who am I (says *David*) that thou hast brought me hitherto ! And Christ's Disciples, Lord why wilt thou manifest thy self to us, (us Twelve) and not to the *World* !

Eccles. 5. 1.

'Tis therefore the more strange to consider, Why and how, *any* that call themselves of the Brotherhood, came so to espouse the quarrel of those *without*; and that with such *Eagerness*, as to strive and fall-out among themselves about the others Concerns. But to Answer more directly;

Rev. 5. 11.

1. This Remnant is not so contemptibly to be spoken of; They are *Ten thousand times Ten thousand*, and *thousands of Thousands*: And how small soever the number be, (if it were but One, it were more by *One* than the whole Creation could deserve: But I say, How few soever the Number be) no Man knowes but himself may be *One* of them; unless by despising the Grace of God in Election, he have proved it otherwise to himself.

2. To pitch on a *Few* whiles in their blood and Enmity against God, and Resolve even *then*, to make them everlastingly happy; and that against the Natural bent of their own will; was a Grace much more high and Sovereign, than to save them for their own better improvement of what they have in common with other Men: (For that would not be of Grace but of D. bt.) Or, if the Lord should bring Ten Thousand times that number into a *Salvable* condition; (as they speak;) but so, as that very possibly Not *one* of them shall ever be saved; it would not bring the Thousandth part of that Glory to His Grace, as to *Save a Few* invincibly.

3. If the Lord did foresee, That but *Few* would believe; and yet Resolv'd to save *none* but such as should believe: Then the Objection (as to Fewness) falls on the Objectors Doctrine as much as ours.

4. As for Godly sorrow, Faith, and Repentance; they are the Gift of God, and proper to the *Elect*: And so, no Reason to suppose the interveniency of *these* in them that are *left*: Or to fear an implacable Resolution to punish and torment *Any* in whom these Possibilities go forth into *Act*.

Other allegations they have against the Doctrine of Election, which will admit of as plain a Solution as those above: But it being my purpose to collect what I should find in the
 . Scriptures

Scriptures for it, and not to controvert the Point; I proceed no farther, but go on to the Usefulness of the Doctrine. Only, by the way, let me premise a Caution or two.

1. Let no Man Tax God with *Injustice* or *Partiality*, because He takes not *All*; Or, because Not Those of highest esteem among *Men*: Do not the Princes of the World exercise Dominion over Men like themselves? Or is there a Subject so mean, but will think himself wrong'd, if Question'd for disposing his own? (which yet is his own but as borrowed.) And shall vain Man presume to arraign his Sovereign Lord! *Woe to him that striveth with his Maker*: If Isa 45. 9. you must be Medling, let it be with *pot-sheards of Earth* like your selves.

2. Let no Man disvalue this Doctrine of Election, because it takes in but a *Remnant*. Why are they stiled *The [little] flock*, but to heighten the Mercy and Priviledge of it in their Esteem! *Noah* did not condemn the Grace of God to himself and his Sons, because the World of Ungodly were excluded the Ark; Nor the Remnant that escaped the Sword in *Egypt*, did not reckon their own Deliverance e'r the less Mercy, because the Rest of their Countrymen had not a Share in it. Men do not use to slight their own Immunities, for other's Not-being interess'd in them; But rather, to value themselves the more upon it.

Jer. 44. 28.

And now, as a Means to Prevent or Remove the evil Surmises Caution'd against; with those other sinister Deductions which carnal Reason may be apt to suggest; Let us draw up a few of those Many and Worthy Improvements this Doctrine is capable of, above and beyond that of the contrary tenour: As also, of those Laws of Duty which it layes upon us. And here I would see first what fruit may be gather'd from the several *branches* of the Proposition; and Then, what from the *Gross*, or *whole* of it promiscuously.

I. Since there is an Election of Men to Salvation, Put you in for a part and interest in it: Though their Number be but Small, Cast in your Lot, and make One among them. My meaning is, That tho' never so few are the Objects of

Inference.

Election, you will make it your business, to prove your self of that Few: If but *Two* in the whole World, who knows but thou mayest be *One* of them? It's our Saviour's Argument, They are but Few that go in at the strait gate; Therefore strive. The Ninevites had not that ground to believe, God would accept them, that you have; for their Ruin was pronounced in peremptory words; and no room expressly left for Repentance; and yet they humbled themselves and turn'd from their evil ways, upon this only consideration, *Who can tell if God will turn away his fierce anger, that we perish not?* It's a happiness worth your Venturing for: For (1) you can lose nothing by endeavouring: (2) You can hardly have a more solid evidence of your being *Elected*, than to have your heart taken with *Electing* love, and casting your self upon it; And (3) never did any perish who ventur'd on this Bottom.

Inference. II. From the Doctrine of Election's *Absoluteness*, is evidenced the exceeding Riches of the grace of God, in that He hath not left this great Concern to *humane contrivance*: but hath laid it more sure and safe, than Men themselves would have done: For, 'tis too evident (by the Reasonings that are used to make Election *Dependent and Conditional*) how it would have gon, if left to the wisdom of Men.

But I shall not doubt to affirm, That this Doctrine of Election's *Absoluteness*, is much afore-hand with that which teacheth it to be *Conditional*, both in point of Encouragement and otherwise; And that as well *Afore* believing, as *Afterwards*.

1. *Before* a Man comes to believe: (supposing him to be Notionally instructed therein *Before*) For, being under conviction of the *Greatness*, and *Multitude* of his Sins; and finding the power of indwelling corruption so *Insurmountable*: Having also a sight of the *Holiness* of God: It needs must prove a *difficult* Matter to believe, that there is *Mercy* and *Pardon* for such a *One* as he; Or, that ever those *domineering* lusts should be made to *submit*: But then considering, 1. That *Electing Love* pitches on the *Chief* of Sinners: 2. That it flows not from, nor is founded upon, any condition to be per-

performed by Men : And 3. That Election has in it *All* that conduceth to life and Godliness ; (These things, I say, considered) it cannot but have a far greater influence on the Soul, to cleave unto God, and follow hard after Him ; than if his Election were suspended upon his Doing *that* which he finds in himself no power to perform. For, he sees by wotul (and yet, *through Grace*, happy) Experience, That as the Law is made weak through the weakness of the flesh ; so also, (setting aside the *Absoluteness* of Electing love) all the means of Grace which are given in Common among Men, would be wholly ineffectual to Salvation : Which difficulties, Electing love in the *Absoluteness* of it, will *Superfede* and set him above them all.

2. *After* a man comes to Believe, this Doctrine of *Absolute* Election, is of singular use and benefit to him, both as tending to keep him on his feet, and to raise him when he is down.

(1) It is a great Preservative in time of Temptation : The Remembrance of *that* love which looked upon him, when he was in his blood, and said he should live, and hath now also made good its Word to him ; must needs operate *strongly* with a gracious heart, against what ever might be unworthy of such love : Let the bait be never so aptly suited, he will turn from it in a holy disdain (as good Joseph did) *How can I do this Wickedness, and sin against God* 39.9. *God*, who hath dealt so bountifully with me !

(2) Nothing more tends to *Recovery* after a fall, than the Consideration of the *Freeness* of God's Love at first, and His Mighty Power in *Quickening*, when altogether dead ; And that *both these* (viz. This Love and this Power) are engaged by an *Absolute* Covenant to bring every one that takes hold thereof, unto Glory ; and therefore, will receive him, not only *After*, upon his Return to his Duty ; but in the *Midst* of his backslidings He will come and heal him. The Lox.'s way of dealing with *Ephraim*, set down in the 57. of *Isaiah* is an instance pertinent to the case in hand : And in the 44. *Chap.* He doth, as it were, Clench and fasten this Nail in a sure place ; Remember, O Jacob, *I have formed thee ; Thou shalt not be forgotten of Me : I have blotted out thy sins ;*

ver. 17, 18.

ver. 21, 22.

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Therefore return unto Me: And Jer. 3. 14. Return, O back-sliding Children, for I am married unto you, (to wit, by His Covenant of Election.) To this purpose also is the edge of Samuel's Argument applied, in 1 Sam. 12. 20, 22, Fear not; ye have done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside from following the Lord: As if he had said, your wickedness (indeed) is great, ye have highly provoked the Lord by your casting Him off; yet be not discouraged, as if the Lord would therefore cast off you; For, the Lord will not forsake His people: (But why?) Because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people. And in ver. 24. he further backs it with the remembrance of the great things God had done for them *afuretime*: Than which, there is nothing of stronger tendency to a Soul's recovery.

III. From the [Personality] of Election,
and

IV. From the [Eternity] of its Original, S

I gather in general:

Inference.

That since the Scriptures have so highly Renowned these two Circumstantial parts of Election, by so frequent a mentioning of them; and that, on occasions of the *solemnest* import: We ought not to pass them by as things of *indifferent* notice; But, as being diversly *Instructive*, *Worthy* to be kept, and *soberly* contended for. The Holy Ghost doth not use to inculcate matters of Ordinary oblervance, or little import: But, as Noting to us, some great *importance* in them; as taxing (also) our *sloth*, and aptness to neglect them; and to stir up our minds to make the more diligent search, *What*, and *what manner* of things they are; and how to be improv'd. In particular:

From the Personality of Election, I Infer.

Inference.

I. That it ought to be minded as matter of the highest honour to the Parties concern'd. The Lord illustrates *Moses* at no ordinary rate, when He tells him [*I know thee by name*] and doubtless, intended that *Moses* himself should account of it, and be highly satisfied therewith, though deny'd in some other things he would fain have had. Thus

a lfo

Exod. 33. 17.

also Paul signalizeth those eminent Saints, who were his fellow-Labourers in the Gospel, That *their [names] were* Phil. 4. 3. *in the Book of Life.* And our Saviour propounds it to His Disciples, as matter of highest Exultation, That *their [names] were written in Heaven.* That our poor insignificant names should be written in God's book, and laid up among His Treasures in Heaven; when the *Generality of Names* (even Names of Note) are written in the Dust! let it not seem a light matter to us: For this is that Ever- Isa. 56. 5. *lasting Name which never shall be cut-off.*

II. The knowledge of this thing, (namely, that God has thus taken Notice of our Names) is a great Privilege: It enlarges the heart to higher expectations; it gives boldness (or freedom) of speech towards God; as if Nothing were too great for such a One to ask. See how Moses grows upon it: No sooner, says God, [I know thee by name] But Moses, Exod. 33. 17. as rapt into the Second, and said would be in the Third Heaven; presently replies, [I beseech thee shew me thy Glory.]

III. As it is matter of Honour, and Privilege: So it will prove one of your best Titles to your Heavenly inheritance. It will signify something one day, (however by some too lightly esteemed Now) when it shall be the great distinguishing character between you and the World: Whoever he be that derives not his Genealogie from this Register, will be put from the Heavenly Priest-hood. The New Jerusalem admits None, but whose Names are written in the Rev. 20. 15. Book of life: yea, [every One] that is not found written there, shall be cast into a lake of fire. Therefore, Give all Ch. 21. 27. *diligence to make your Election sure.*

IV. It also imports Matter of Duty from us. When Princes confer titles of honour, lands, or Immunities; They use to reserve some kind of Rent or other acknowledgment; To mind their Subjects (though Favourites) of whom they hold. You have no such way of Owning your great Benefactor, Nor no such Means of being Considerable in the World; as by bearing the badge and impress of Him who gave you this Name of honour. Let His Name, therefore, be Named upon you; Carry His Name

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Name in your *bosom*; bear it on your *Shoulders*, and the *Palms of your hands*; Let the Choyce of your *Affections*, The Chief of your *Strength*, and the whole of your *Activity*, be employed for His honour: Let every thing you do, bear an Impression of Him whose Name is *Holy*.

Then, from the Antiquity of Election.

Inference. I. Let the *Ancientness* of Electing love, draw up our hearts to a very dear and honourable esteem of it. Pieces of Antiquity: (though of base Mettal, and otherwise of little use or value;) how venerable are they with learned Men! And ancient Charters, how carefull are Men to preserve them; although they contain but Temporary priviledges, and sometimes but of Trivial Moment! How then should the Great Charter of Heaven, so much Elder than the World, and Containing Matters of Eternal Weight and Glory! Which also hath been confirm'd by so many Promises, Exemplified by Multitudes of Cales, with a Seal affix'd more precious than Heaven it self; (All which proclaim The *Eternal Validity* of it) How should this (I say) be had in everlasting Remembrance, and the thoughts thereof be very precious to us! Lying down, Rising up, and all the day long Accompanying of us! And how carefull should we be, Not onely to keep this Charter *uncancelled*, but also to keep it *clean* from all sorts of Dust and soil, by which the legibility thereof might any way be obscured to our selves or Others!

Inference. II. Let Election's *Eternal Origine*, be an Argument for Its *Eternal Duration*; and so, of the Saints Invincible Perseverance to Glory. That which is *from Everlasting* shall be *to Everlasting*: If the *Root* be *Eternal*, so are the *Branches*. Surely, For this good End (among others) is it twice recorded in the Revelation, That *Their Names were written in the book of life* [from the foundation of the World] Namely, To signify and assure, That the Elect shall be *safely* and *surely* kept from those dreadful Apostacies, which the Rest of the world shall fall into. And hence (perhaps) it is, That we read of *Nothing* done in Eternity, but

Rev. 13.8

Ch 17.8.

but Election and things peculiar thereto as the Promise of Eternal life; The Lamb slain; The Kingdom prepared, &c. Election is an Eternal Fountain, that never leaves Running whiles a Vessel is empty, or capable of holding more; and it stands open to all Comers: Therefore come, and if ye have not sufficient of your own, Go and borrow Vessels, Empty Vessels, not a Few; Pay your debts out of it, and live on the Rest to Eternity.

V. From the Doctrine of Choosing in Christ:

I. It is an high Demonstration of God's love to His Chosen Ones: We may say of it as Hiram to Solomon, *Inference.*
Because the Lord loved His People, He set His Son over them. 2 Chr. 2. 11.
 It is also an eminent proof of His Manifold Wisdom; To Contrive the blessedness of His people in such a Manner, as should most Certainly secure their obtainment of it; Most signally illustrate His love to them; and so, most affectionately winn upon their hearts, and oblige them to Himself for ever. We may hence also discern something of that Immense Greatness and Holiness of God, That though He so loved His Elect, as to make them *One in Him-* Joh 17. 21.
self; That Union could not be admitted without a Mediatour equal with Himself.

II. Gather hence, your stability and safety: What ever streight or difficulty you are Enttring upon, Drink of this Brook in the way, and lift up your head. What ever pertains to life and Godliness, Grace and Glory; This life and That to come; is all layed up in Christ: (As all sorts of Food in the Ark, for those who found Grace in His sight) *All Fullness dwells in him, and that for you.*
 He is not onely a Root stable in himself, but stablishing to you: Communicating sap and spirit to all his Branches: Whiles there is life in Him you cannot die. This is *That* makes the Saints stand Firm and sacred in the midst of dangers; *The evil one toucheth them not.* Let 1 Joh 5. 18.
 all the Rebell-Crew of adversaries (Satan, the World, your own evil hearts) associate themselves, and take Counsel together; it all comes to nought: Let their Assaults be Renewed
 O again

again and again, they are still beaten off: They gird themselves and are broken in pieces: They gird again, and again they are broken in pieces. Thus it is, and thus it shall be, to the end of our Warfare, *For God is with us.* This was it made *David* fearless, even *in the valley of the shadow of death, The Lord was with him.* And those three Noble Confessors, they walked secure in the fiery furnace, because *the Son of God was Among them.* Therefore Do All, Suffer All, and Expect All, as being in Christ, and not otherwise. But woe to him that is alone, who when he falls hath not Christ to help him up.

Inference.

1 Cor. 6. 17.

III. Let this your Relation to Christ be evidenced by your Likeness to him: *He that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit.* The holy Oyl that was poured on your Head runs down to the Skirts of His Garment; (i. e. to the very meanest of His Followers) and they carry a-long the precious scent with them, where ever they go; (or should do, as Paul did, 2 Cor. 2. 14.) It is natural to those married to Christ to bring forth fruit unto God; and see it be such as will abide the Test; Endure all sorts of weather, and be bettered by it.

Rom 7. 4.

Inference.

IV. This Doctrine illustrates That of Justification; as shewing *Wherein* the true Matter of Justifying Righteousness doth consist; and How it comes to be Ours: *Our Faith,* (or Act of Believing) cannot be the Matter of it, for that it is an imperfect thing; and so, cannot be Reckoned in the place of perfect Righteousness: For It must be a Righteousness perfectly perfect that Justifies, as it was a sin sinfully sinful that Condemn'd. This Righteousness also must be our own (and is) in a way of Right; (as *Adam's* sin also was) though perform'd in the person of Another. Christ and Adam being Paralels in their Head-ship, the imputation of the One's Guiltiness, and of the other's Righteousness, are Righteously applyed to their respective seeds. And this was a Main end of the Lord's Putting Those He would Justifie, into Christ; That He being made sin and a Curse for them, They might be made the Righteousness of God in Him; and so, God might be

be Just in Justifying of them. Faith (in this matter) holds the place of an *Evidence* or *Seal* of that Righteousness which belong'd to us, as being in Christ, before we believed; and is given us on the account of our Interest therein, that we might apprehend it; and enjoy the Benefits of it: Which is surely, a far better Ground to build our Justification upon, than our weak and imperfect faith, which stands in need daily of the Righteousness of God, for its own support. Therefore.

Phil. 1. 29.

V. Make it a main part of your Care and business, To *Inference.* get into Christ and to abide in Him.

VI. The *funding* of Election upon Grace, Affords Us *divers useful instructions: As,*

I. To fall down, and Adore the Great GOD for this unspeakable discovery of His love to Men. It is one of the *Richest* Mercies that He would not trust us in *our own* keeping: That *Another*, (and He One that had not the least need of us) should be more provident for us than we would have been for our selves: That our *Chiefest Interest* should have the *biggest security*: That it should be founded upon *Grace*; (the Attribute which Our Great King most delights to honour.) And that He should do it (as it were) against *our wills*; (For so it is, in as much as to graft our happiness on the Will of *Another*, is contrary to Nature) Of *all* Bottoms, we should not have pitch'd it *there*; and yet, in truth, no other ground would hold us: His Name may well be called *Wonderful*; *It is not after the manner of Men*; *This is the Lords doing, and let it be Marvellous in our eyes.* *Psa'. 118. 23.*

Inference.

II. It shows what Reason we have to discard and Cast off for ever, that Groundless, and blindfold opinion, which lays the stress of Salvation on a thing of Nought: (For, what else is the Will of a frail and Mutable Man?) To forsake a living fountain, and Rest on a Cistern, a broken Cistern, What folly is it! To cast our Eagles wings, and trust to a foot out of Joint; who would do it, that is not void of understanding? Surely, *Job* was aware of it, when he professeth,

Inference.

feeth, He would not value a life that depended on his own Righteousness, Job. 9. 15 with 21.

Isa 2. 21.

The Grace of God is little beholden to that Doctrine which would give the Glory of it to a graceless thing: And as little have the Souls of men to thank it for: It feeds them with dreams and fancies; which, when they awake, will leave them *hardly bestead and hungry*. Therefore, sit not down under the shadow of that *Gourd*; It hath a worm at the *Root*; And they will not be held guiltless, nor kept from the Scorching Sun, whoever they be that shelter themselves in the Covert of it. It's a spark of Men's own kindling; wherewith though compassed round, they'll lie down in sorrow, *Isa. 50. 11*. Therefore let those who disrellish this Doctrine, because it founds not Salvation upon *Self*, look well to their standing and shift from it in time.

Inference.

III. Fall in practically with the Doctrine of Election as founded upon Grace. As it was *Grace* which gave you your Elect being; So, let it be your Spirit and utmost endeavour to improve this your being, to the praise of that *Grace*.

Rom. 11. 18.

1. Give it the sole honour of Election's Original: Suffer not Free-will Grace, or any thing else, pretend to a share in the parentage of it: Let not your faith, whether *foreseen* or *perfected*, be reckoned the *ground-work*, or *Motive*, of your Election; It is a *branch* of it, and the *branch* (you know) *cannot bear the Root*: Even Faith it self must not (yea, if it be right, it *will not*) *gather where it hath not strewed*. Own nothing (therefore) that may detract from the honour that is due to Sovereign Grace.

Pf. 26. 11.

2. Bear your self upon this Grace, against all your weakness and unworthyness: Let not these discourage you, but rather plead them as occasions by which *Grace* will be manifested, and shew it self to be What it is. Thus did *David*, *Pardon my Sin, for it is great*: And *Moses*, when all that people's obedience could not furnish him with an Argument for God's continuing His presence with them, what's his Plea? They are an *honest ingenuous* people? *Tractable to thy Commands? pliant to thy will? They are worthy for whom Thou shouldst do this; For t'ey love thy Company, and have built Thee*

Thee a Tabernacle ? No, there is none of this Stuff in it : But, let my Lord, I pray thee, go with us ; For it is a stiff-necked people ; their Neck is an iron sinew, and their Brow brass ; Therefore, go Thou with us, to better us, to soften us, and to pardon us : And by this shall the freeness of thy Grace appear to us : For, How else shall it be known that I and this people have found Grace in thy Sight ? But yet, *Exod 33.16.* withall ;

(1) Look that you make not a light Matter of your Sins or of your Sinfulness : you cannot think bad enough of your self or of them ; nor be too much humbled : Onely, be not cast down.

(2) Use the Means that Grace hath appointed : Watch and be Sober ; Watch unto Prayer ; Put on the whole Armour of God, and keep it close about you ; Your Sword and your Shield, be sure you forget not : But still let your eyes be towards the hand of Grace through Christ, for Councel, Strength, Agency, and every good thing ; And depend on it for *conserving* and *actuating* the Grace it hath wrought in you, as Plants do on their Roots : The Spouse, after Married to Christ, prays to be *Drawn to Him.* *Cant. 1.4.*

(3) What-ever befalls you, Remember the Good Pleasure of God is in it ; *Hold your peace as Aaron did ;* or if *Levit. 10.3.* you will speak, *let your speech be seasoned with Salt, It is* *1 Sam. 3.19.* *the Lord, let Him do as seemeth Him good.*

Other useful Instructions from the Doctrine of Election in General and Together.

I. It being a Doctrine of so great Importance, be not indifferent about it : Put your self on the tryal touching your interest in it, and bring forth your evidences for it : Observe what are the properties of Elected Ones, and see if they stand on your side : *Inference.*

1 As touching the Great business of Salvation, Do you submit to Mercy without Indenting, and making terms with God ? Have you laid your self at his feet, with [*Peradventure He will save me alive ?*] And if He say, I have no pleasure in thee ; Lo, *here* I am, and *here* I will

Job. 13. 15.

Mat. 20. 2, 7,
and 10.

Iye: If I must perish, I will perish *here* : I cannot die in a better place or posture. Thus did *Job* , when the Lord seemed to set Himself against him, as resolv'd to destroy him; yet still he resolv'd to Trust in Him, and to hold fast his Integrity. This is a Love *more Noble*, and of an *higher Extract*, than those are acquainted with, who Conclude, That upon their doing This and That, (which they suppose every Man hath power to do) they shall be saved : For, such kinde of love is *Mercenary*; He will not stirr, Nor look towards the Vinyard, until he have agreed for his penny : (which yet, he is not Content with when he has it) The Other goes in and falls to his Work ; and leaves to his Master, to give him What is meet ; which also he leaves to his Master's Judgment, and not his Own : and truly, he speeds ne'r the worse for his so doing. (But I would not be taken to intend a Contentation or Willingness to be destroyed : This, I hope, is cleared afore, under the first general Head.)

2 Do you Own God's Sovereign Commands without disputing? *Abraham* did thus, in the business of *Isaac* ; although he could not see how the Promise of God, and the killing of his Son, could stand together : And so will *Abraham's* Children do. They know that their Lord is a Great King, hath absolute Dominion, and giveth account of none of his Matters : What He is pleas'd to Command, their duty is to obey, without asking a Reason Why ? Or, how will these things Consist ? Such demands (they know) become not the lips of those who live upon Grace.

3 Doth your love towards God, hold the same Course that His love hath done towards you ? All that God hath done, or will do for His Chosen, it is the Product of *Electing love* : Does all your Obedience Rise from Love ? And does this love of *yours* grow out of *His* ? Is His Electing love the *Root* of it ? Is all that you do towards God, in a way of *Gratitude* ? and with Designe to Glorifie His Grace ? And when the Lord seems to go from you, Do ye follow the harder after Him ? As He, for a long time, followed you, waiting That He might be Gracious unto you. This

is truly a God-like Love; The eminency whereof lies in this, That He loved us when enemies to Him; and loved us into a likeness to Himself: Answerable whereto, we shall love Him, even whiles our fears may apprehend Him *Job. 13. 15.* to be our enemy: And through the power of His Love secretly working in our hearts, go on to love Him, until the Glory of the Lord be Risen upon us. You could not *thus* love God, if He had not loved you first. *1 Joh. 2. 19.*

4 Do you Rejoyce in the thoughts of Electing love, *What* it is, and *Whence* it came? What it hath designed you for, and will bring you unto at last? Is it your delight to converse with the Book of Life? And do you Rejoyce more That your Names are written in Heaven, than it Devils were Subject to you? When your flesh and your heart fail you, do you look to Electing Love as your Strength and Portion, and Count it a *Goodly heritage*? Do you aim at That which Electing Love hath designed you for, and because so Designed; It by any Means you may attain to it? And are you better Satisfied to be at the Good Pleasure of God, than at your own? And bless his Wisdom and Grace, for undertaking the dispose of your Eternal Interest? Such fruit could not be, but from *that Seed of God.*

Let me add a few Tokens more of True love, according to the Carriage of it among Men.

1. He that loves Another, will delight in his presence, and seek Occasions of *Conversing* with him.

2. Being absent, he thinks much upon him, and gives welcome entertainment to whatever may be a Remembrance of him.

3. He will seek the Well-pleasedness of him who is the object of his love.

1 By presenting things lovely to him.

2 By avoiding whatever may disgust him.

3 By a wary preventing, or speedy removing, what might give the Other occasion to be jealous of his love to him.

4. He will Candidly Interpret whatever might seem a declining

declining of the Others love to him ; And not be satisfied until it be recover'd, or better understood.

Inference. II. If you be of this happy Remnant of Election, Then look for ill usage from the World : *Esau* (you know) hated *Jacob* because of the blessing ; and so will the World you, so soon as it comes to be discern'd : Think it not strange, but take it as an Appendix of Election ; As a part of *That* you were Chosen unto ; And as *That* by which (partly) you must be fitted for the main End. Your Lord Himself was made perfect through Sufferings : And Those *Foreknown* were Predestinated to be Conformed to their Head, in *Suffering* as well as *Glory*.

John 15. 18, 19

Heb 2 10.

*Rom. 8. 38.
ch. 6. 5*

Inference. III. Having trusted Electing love for *Eternal Salvation*, see you distrust it not for things of *lesser Moment*. When the Lord Ordained you to life, He Ordained also All those various occurrences, Windings, and Turnings you should be exercised with in your way thither : And ('tis sure,) He does nothing in vain. There is need of all sorts of weather for the Earth's good : All-Fair would destroy it. Know it therefore of a Truth, that all your Concerns were Fore-determin'd of God ; and that so well, as all your Prudence and love to your selves could not Mend it : Nor can all your Care and Solitude alter any of them, either as to Matter or Form ; No, Not to change the colour of an hair : Therefore, *Take no thought*.

Matth. 6. 25.

But whence is it, That Believers, who have trusted God for their Souls, should yet make so difficult of Trusting Him for their Outward Man ? And so Comber themselves with unprofitable burden ?

Earthly things are nearer our Senses ; and thence we are more sensible of the Comfort of them, as also of their want. They also seem more within our line and Compass ; and so we Reach more earnestly after them, and are answerably troubled, when we fall short : Whereas we should carry it for Temporals, as we do (or should do, rather) for our Souls, and Spiritual portion ; That is, look to our present Duty, Be diligent in our place, and Content with such things

as

as we have; Bearing our selves as becomes the Children of *Heb. 13.5.* such a Father, so Rich, Wise, Bountiful, Tender and Faithful to us: Who always gives the best supply; and *That* in the best Proportion, Manner, and Time.

Have therefore your Faith exercised; As about the Greatest, so also about the Smallest and Commonest Matters: Use Grace, and have Grace; It is *want of Use* makes lame of your right hand; and *Much using* renders more useful. Faith is the head of your Spiritual senses; And if *That* be Active, the Rest cannot be idle, Nor much at a loss. Faith also is a plain Dealer; It represents things as they are; Shews them in their true Dimensions, with their use and end. See therefore, that you never hold a Consultation, unless Faith be present, yea and *President* too; Else *All* will be in disorder at once: One *Act* of Faith shall sooner Remove the Mountain, than all the Cattle on a Thousand hills.

Lastly, You that have closed with this Truth, and having made diligent search, do finde in your selves *those Marks of God's Elect*; sit down and take the Comfort of it; Let this Joy of the Lord be your strength; Eat your bread, and drink your wine (or *Water* either) with a Merry heart, since God hath accepted you. If *David's* heart was so taken with that love which chose him to be King afore the house of *Saul*; how should our Souls be rapt into the third Heaven, That *We* (poor unworthy wretched *We*) should be taken into that *peculiar favour* in which the *generality* of *Men* have nothing to do! How should it affect our hearts!

Art thou of those who are *Wise* or *Noble* according to the flesh? Be filled with an holy Amazement and exultation, (Rejoyce with trembling) That the Great GOD (to whom thou wast no more than others thy Consorts that are left; and who commonly *Chooses the base and foolish*, thereby to Magnifie His Grace) should thus go out of His way to call in *thee*; And hath also made His Call *effectual* to thee; even *then* when thou wast environ'd with a world of temptations to obstruct it.

And if thou be a Man of *low degree*, (poor, weak, foolish, of no account among Men, even as one that is *Not*) and hath the Lord regarded thee in thy low estate, and Magnified thee, by setting His love upon thee? Hath He taken thee from the dunghill, to set thee among *Princes*; even the *Princes of the World* to come? This is *that Exaltation* which *the poor* should always Rejoyce in, according to *James 1. 9.*

Were you the *head* instead of being the *tail*; Were the *Necks* of your enemies *under your feet*? yea, were the *Devils themselves made subject to you*; It could not afford you the thousandth part of that Cause of Rejoycing, as that *your Names are written in Heaven.*

Are other men prosperous in the world, and free from trouble, whiles you are reduc'd to a low estate, and chastened every Morning? Have, perhaps, but an *handful of Meal*, and a *little oyl* in a *Cruze, &c.* yet think not your Portion *Mean* or *hardly* dealt out: your good things are to come; They are growing in the other World; And at the time of harvest, the Lord will send his Angels for you: yea, your Lord Himself will come and fetch you thither: And you shall be *for ever* with Him; In whose presence is *fulness of joy*, and at whose Right hand are *Rivers of pleasures for evermore*: And then you will *Sing*, [The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places] At least, *say so Now.* As *Abraham* dealt by his Concubines children, so doth God by the *Ishmaels* of the world; He gives them portions, and sends them away; But the Inheritance He reserves for His *Isaacs*; To them He gives all that He hath; yea, even *Himself*: And what can we have more!

OF

REDEMPTION.

IN *this* Point we are equally concern'd with *that* of *Election*, as the Great Comprehensive *Means* of bringing-about the Greatest *End*, viz. the *Glory* of God in the Salvation of His Chosen.

That our Lord Jesus Christ hath a *Body* or *Church*, to whom He is *Head* and *Saviour*; is not supposed a Question. But, *Who* they are that do make-up this Body; Whether the *Whole* of *Mankind* universally, or *Some* particular *Persons*: Whether He had in His death the same respect to *All* as to *Some*: And whether *Any* of those he died for, may miss of the benefits accruing by His death; are questions of great Import, and worthy a serious deliberation: To Resolve which, is the scope of the present Discourse; The Substance whereof is in three Positions.

- I. *That the Body or Church of Christ consists of Elect Persons.*
- II. *That for These it was that He laid down His life.*
- III. *That the intent of His death cannot be frustrate.*

For the [I] of *These*.

By this [Body or Church] of Christ, I understand the Designed Subjects of his Spiritual Kingdom, or Members of His Mystical Body, to whom He was appointed by the Father to be Head and Saviour; and They to stand related to Him as their Prophet, Priest, and King: Which threefold office He bears peculiarly towards the *Elect*, The Church of the First-born, and heirs of the World to come. And of *These* doth His Body consist: i. e. It is made-up of *These* exclusive to *Others*; Their number is certain and intire, and cannot be broken, either by Addition or Diminution. Of *this*, the Tabernacle was a figure, 1. In re-

spect of its Symmetry or Proportion of parts; which induced a singular beauty upon it; Towards which, Nothing could be added, nor any thing abated. 2. In that all the parts and Dimensions thereof were predetermined of God; and not left, in the least, to humane Arbitrement or Contingency: And these are expressly said to be *Patterns of things in the Heavens*; that is, Of the Heavenly Temple, or Church of the First-born which are written *There*.

*Heb. 9. 23.
cb 12. 23.*

This Conclusion is drawn from such premises as these;

1. In that our Lord and Saviour so manifestly shews Himself concern'd for the *Elect*, as having some *peculiar* Interest and Propriety in them, and charge of them. With *These* his delights were from Everlasting; *Prov. 8.* And as soon as they were *actually* in being, He began His *actual* Converses with them: and therein did even *confin*e Himself to the *Elect Seed*. With what unbelievable Patience and Goodness did He superintend the Church or *Elect Nation*, forty years together in the Wilderness! bearing them as on Eagles wings, and tending them as the Apple of His eye! And when he dwelt upon Earth, He went not beyond the bounds of the Holy Land; where also all His delight was among the *Saints*. *These* He made his Consorts, and Men of His Council. And when ye find Him with *others*, it was for the *Elect's* sake that were among them. How frequently, and with what well-pleasedness doth He speak of *These*! Professing His love to them, and that according to the highest patern, *John 15. 9. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you.* And how great things He would do for them; Not to the *Halving* of His Kingdom, but the laying down of His life for them; Gathering them in, Raising them up, and giving them to sit with Him in His Throne. But, for the World, He takes little notice of them, except with a kind of contempt and comination; *Let them alone: Shake off the dust off your feet: Give not that which is holy unto dogs: &c.* Yea, though they seek Him, they shall not find Him: But for His *Elect*, He is found of them, even whiles they

Acts 7. 46, 48.

Pf. 16. 3.

*Joh. 10. 15, 16.
cb 6. 40.*

Rev. 3. 21.

Joh. 7. 34.

Isa. 55. 1.

they think not of Him: The Instances of *Matthew*, the Woman of *Samaria*, the possessed *Gadaren*, His People at *Corinth*,-- are Records of it. And all this, because These are His Portion, and the lot of His Inheritance; *Deut.* 32. 9, 10. As Christ our Head is not of this World; so neither is his Kingdom, nor the Subjects of it.

It is true, The Father hath given Christ to be Head over *All*: But, His Headship over Men in *general*, and His Headship over the *Church*, have a far different respect and consideration: He is God of the *whole Earth*, but *Jeshurun's* God in a way peculiar to His *Chosen*: *Deut.* 33. 26. *Isa.* 44. 2. An Headship of *Dominion* He hath over *Rebels*; And service He hath from them, (though they think not so, nor intend any thing less:) *Nebuchadnezzar* was His hired Days-man against *Tyre*, and *Cyrus* against *Babylon*; whose right hand He held, though they knew Him not: So, *Moab* was his *Washpot*: But, for the *Elect*, they are His *natural* Subjects; (though *not naturally* so:) They are *His* by another *title*, and to another *End*: and so intimate is the Relation between *Him* and *Them*, that they are said to be *Of His flesh, and of His bones*: *Eph.* 5. 30. They both have one Soul and Spirit; He and They make one perfect Man. *Ezek.* 29. 18. *Isa.* 45. 1. *Pf.* 60. 8. *Eph.* 5. 30. *ch.* 4. 13.

That the whole World is put in subjection to Christ, is for the *Elect's* sake; the power He hath over *others*, is in order to their Salvation; He is Head over all things to the [*Church*] that is, To Subject, Dispose, and Order all for the Church's good; As in the seventeenth of *John*, He is said to have power over all flesh, that He might give eternal life (not to all He hath power over, but) to as many as the Father had given Him: Which [*Giving*] imports [*Election*] as going afore it: And therefore He says in v. 6. I have manifested thy name to the Men which Thou gavest me out of the World: Thine they were, (that is, by Election) and Thou gavest them Me: It may be said of them, as in *Heb.* 10. 5. A Body hast thou prepared Me; which, though chiefly intended there of His humane Nature, as true it is of His Body Mystical; All the Members of which were written in God's *Pf.* 139. 16. *Eph.* 1. 22.

A Practical Discourse

book (of Election) *when as yet there was none of them.* He therefore prays for *These* as a party distinct from the *World*, and Given to him for an *higher End*; as appears by comparing the 2, 6, 9, 21, 24, 26, verses of that 17 *John*.

II. We find, That [*Church*] and [*Elect*] are but two several Titles of the same persons, in a several respect: [*Elect*] as Chosen of God to Salvation; and so, they are called *The Church of [God]*, and said to be *Sanctified by God the Father*, Jude v. 1. And *the Church of [Christ]* as given or committed to Him by the Father in order to that Salvation, *John* 17. 6. It was this Church to whom the Apostles inscribed their Epistles, where we find them sometimes intitled [*Beloved of God*] Rom. 1. 7. Sometimes, *The Church of God*, and *Sanctified in Christ*; 1 Cor. 1. 2. At other times, *Saints* and *Faithful Brethren in Christ*; Col. 1. 2. Then, *Churches of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. And *Church of the First-born*, Heb. 12. 23. And sometime, expressly [*Elect*] 1 Pet. 1. 2. By all which is signified, That the Church of Christ consists of *Elect persons*: That these various Appellations, are but so many terms indifferently used about the same Subject; and *All* as Notes of distinction from the *World*.

When Christ shall appear in His Glory, then shall His Members be gathered to Him; *Zach.* 14. 5. *The Lord my God shall come, and [all the Saints] with thee.* And *Paul* (discourling the same thing) says, *They that are Christ's at His coming*; 1 Cor. 15. 23. which shews, That they are Christ's so as Others are not. And that it is meant of *Elect persons*, appears by our Saviour's own words, when speaking of that His Coming, and of the same Persons who are said to be *His*, and to *come with Him*, He gives them expressly *That Denomination*, *He shall send forth His Angels, and they shall gather together His [Elect]* Mat. 24. 31. But, as for the Rest of the Dead, they lived not again till a Thousand years after; Rev. 20. 5. Therefore, these [*Rest*] were no part of *This Body*. It may also be noted, That those who did not Rise with the Saints, are specified here by the same Word or Note of distinction, as Those

N^o 2.

Not-Elected are in Rom. 11. *The Election hath obtained, and the [Rest] were blinded; v. 7.* And that Those who had part in the first Resurrection, are the same persons that are written in the Lamb's book of life, is evident, by comparing Rev. 20. 4. with chap. 13. 8.

III. It was of Necessity, that the Body or Church of Christ should be composed of the *Elect Seed*;

1. Because none else were fit to be of this Body, but such as should be like the Head of it. Carnal Members would be as uncomely to a Spiritual Head, as one of the Brutes to be Adam's companion. The King's Daughter-elect (to make her a suitable match for his Son) must be *all-glorious within*: Not only of the same outward metal, (for so were those other Creatures with Adam) but made in the same Mould, and indued with the same Spirit and Understanding: There must be a congruity in all the parts throughout: They must be copies of Him; each one resembling the Children of a King: If the Head be Heavenly, so must the Members: They cannot walk together, if not thus agreed. Judg. 2. 18.

2. This likeness to Christ is proper to the Elect: It's a Royal privilege intailed upon them, and cannot descend or Revert to any out of that line. That this likeness to Christ is requisite to all His Members, and also peculiar to Elect Persons, are both attested in Rom. 8. 29. *Whom He did foreknow, He also did Predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son; that He might be the First-born among many Brethren*: Which implies, that the Fore-known (or Elect) only are predestinate thereto; and, that were it not for Predestination, the First-born should have but a thin Assembly to Preside amongst: (indeed, nothing but blanks for His great adventure and long expectation.) In Eph. 1. 3, 4, 5. he further appropriates those Spiritual blessings (by which Men are conformed to Christ) to the same persons; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ; [According as He hath Chosen] us in Him: -- Having Predestinated us to the Adoption of Children,*

aren, &c. By these two Scriptures it appears, that *God's Children* and *Christ's Brethren* are the same persons; and that they were made so by Election. But, are *Christ's Brethren* and *His Church* the same Persons? Take your solution from *Hebr. 2. 12.* *I will declare thy Name unto my [Brethren] In the midst of the [Church] will I sing praise unto Thee.*

3. This *likeness to Christ* is not attainable by any without first being in Him as their Head; For which cause the Elect were Chosen *in Him*. It is out of Christ's fulness that all Grace is received: and in order to that Reception, there must be *Union*. The branch cannot bear fruit of it self, (nor indeed be a branch) unless it grow out of the Vine. For which cause and end, the designed Members of His Body were separated from their wild Olive root, and put into Christ by Election: And hereby they are made partakers of the fatness of that Heavenly Root; (*i. e.* of the Spirit of Christ, which is called the Anointing, in *1 Job. 2. 27.*) In this respect the First and Second *Adams* are set-forth as *parallels* touching headship to their respective Bodies. As from *Adam* their natural Head, all Mankind have derived their natural being; So from Christ their Spiritual Head, do all the Elect Seed receive their Spiritual being and Nature. On which account he is styled *The everlasting Father*, and They *His Children*; *Isa. 9. 6.* *Heb. 2. 13.* They were all in Christ from Eternity, in as just (but spiritual) a Reality, as Mankind in *Adam*, or *Levi* in *Abraham's* loyns when *Melchisedee* met him. *Eve's* production (as to the manner of it) was paternal of this: She was made of *Adam's* substance, but she came not out of his loyns, but out of his Side: So is the New Creature extracted out of Christ's; They are *bone of His bones, and flesh of his flesh*; (spiritually understood.) And none can thus proceed from Him, but such as were in Him *Deceitively by Election*: Men are blessed with these spiritual blessings, as being in Christ, and not otherwise: *Eph. 1. 4.* *Tis. 3. 5, 6.*

Eph. 1. 4.

Job. 15.

Gen. 2. 21-23.

Inse-

Inferences.

I. We gather hence the honourable and safe estate of *Infer. 1.*
the Church, which hath the Son of God to be Head and
Saviour of it!

II. Let no Man pretend to this honourable Relation, *Infer. 2.*
without something to shew for it; by which he may a-
vouch his Membership to Christ. The currentest mark and
evidence whereof, will be your conformity, not to Men or
Self; but to Christ Jesus your Head: It is *that* must deno-
minate you *Christians indeed*. At latter day Christ will know
None, but who *have made their Robes white in the blood of*
the Lamb. All Hang-by's and Ivy-claspers will then be
shook off, and no One retain'd but such as have *His sub-*
stance in them. Many shall come and plead their works,
What they have been, and what they have done; and their
old hypocrisy will be so Immovable and Impudent, that
they'l even expostulate the matter with Him, *Have not we* *Mat. 7. 22.*
Prophecied in thy Name? and in thy Name cast out Devils?
and done many wonderful works? &c. Of whom our Lord
will profess, That He *knows them not*; No, nor *Never knew* *ver. 23.*
them: He knows His own by their *likeness* to Him; He
knows, and cannot but know, the Members of His Body;
My sheep I know, but *who are ye?* will He then say to all
that are but *professing* Members of Him: Which will be,
indeed, a Doleful conclusion of their groundless (though
specious) Confidence! Look to it therefore in time.

III. Let those who are really of this Body, bear them- *Infer. 3.*
selves *worthily*, both towards their Head and Fellow-
Members: And let *That* be your badge of distinction from
Christians *merely Nominal*.

1. Own the *Supremacy* of your Head, by giving Him
the Preheminence in all things: Call no Man on Earth
Master, (*i.e.* In point of Faith :) Give unto *Cæsar* all
that belongs to him; yet so, as still to have respect unto
Christ as the Supreme Law giver.

2. Submit to His Government; Steer your course by
His Counsels, and follow His Conduct: Go after Him

Q

where

wherever He shall lead you : Let all your senses have their Seat in your Head : Let every thing be understood by you, according to His sense and interpretation of it.

3. Expose your self for Him ; Stand between Him and Wrongs ; Preserve His honour and Interest with the utmost hazard of your self : Let life and death be as things indifferent to you , to as Christ may be Magnified in you ; *Phil. 1. 20.*

4. Look to this your Head for supply of all Grace : From His fulness it is to be had, and No where else. Therefore, Hold to your Head , lest Notions beguile you of your Reward , *Col. 2. v. 18, 19.* Be sure, withall, that you keep to your Place and Duty, lest you miss of the Nourishment that belongs to you : A Member out of its place, is (for the time) as a Member cut off.

Joh. 15 4, 5.

5. Adorn your Head by a constant Reaching at perfect Conformity to Him ; Shew forth His virtues ; Be holy as He was ; Let all your fruits be such as are meet for such a Root. God the Father is the Head of Christ , in all that He bore the express Image of His Person , in all that He did : He could do Nothing but what He saw the Father do : So do you by your Head Christ ; Make Him your Example : And in order thereto , live upon Him as your immediate Root ; and give Him the honour of His own productions.

Then Carry it towards your Brethren as Members of the same Body.

1. Usurp not upon them, as if more than a fellow-member with them. Judge not the Strong, Nor despise the Weak : Who made thee a Judge ? There's none but hath need of forbearance from others ; and the less you see your need, the more need you have of it.

2. Intrude not into Anothers place and office : Each Member hath its own, to which it is fitted : *This* it best becomes , and here it will be most useful ; Elsewhere it would be both uselefs, and a deformity ; as a finger, or other Member, if transposed and out of its own joynt.

3. Shew your Co-membership by your love and tender regard

regard towards others: Have compassion on the Ignorant, and those out of the way (as your Head towards you.) If *Heb. 5.2.*
 One be weak or Wounded, let him that is Strong and Whole, support and bind it up: If one foot stumble, let the other step in for its help: *Consider thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* Members of the same Natural body, need no Arguments to perswade to this duty; they do it by Instinct: And the want of Compassionateness in us towards others, (though it shall not dry up, yet) may much restrain, at least in our apprehension, the Springs of Christ's pity towards our Selves. *Gal. 6.1.*

4. Let the good of the whole have the preference before a particular part; And let That of a lower use deny it self for the safety and assistance of That which is more Noble: This (in a degree) is to lay down our life for the Brethren. He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men; and a good evidence it is of your Membership to Christ.

IV. Let every One that is of this Body, be well apaid with his Lot; Be glad and Rejoyce for ever in this your Portion. This is the Exaltation the brother of low degree should value himself by. Whatever your Rank or condition may be in the World, Rest contented with your place, and be thankful for it: Desire not (your self) to change it; But strive to fill it up, and be as useful in it as you can. Look also for Troubles, and think them not strange: The Captain of your Salvation was made perfect through sufferings; and the servant may not look to fare better than his Lord. *Infer. 4. James 1. 9. Heb 3. 10.*

V. If Jesus Christ be your Head, Be confident then of all Love, Counsel, Care, and Protection from Him: Union with Him intitles to All He hath. It is Natural to the head, to love, and to Cherish the Body, and every Member of it: To Contrive and Cast about for its welfare and safety: As a Man cherisheth his own flesh, so doth Christ His Church, *Eph. 5. 29.* What though thou be, in thy self, an uncomely Member? He will put the more Comeliness upon thee; He will cloath thee, and Feed thee, and Physick thee: *1 Cor. 12. 23.*

Ps. 84. vii.

He will give Grace and Glory, and No good thing will He with-hold from thee : For, He being the First born, Prince and Head of the family, all the younger Brethren are to be Maintained upon His Inheritance .

Infer. 6.

VI. Rest also assured of safe Conduct to the Promised land. Adversaries and difficulties you will certainly meet with: Remaining Corruptions (like the mix'd multitude) will be tumultuating and tempting *within* ; The Amalekites and People of His wrath will stand in your way *without*, Or be falling on your Rear, to Cut-off the weak and feeble; And the Serpent will yet be Nibbling and bruising your heel : But higher than that he cannot touch; your heart and your head are out of his Reach, and therefore you are safe; yea this Serpent himself *shall be bruised under your feet shortly*—Come (will your Captain say to you) Come, set your feet on the Neck of this King of pride, and do by him as he hath done by others, and would have done also by you : Give him double according to his works. This is the time when ye shall Judge Angels ; And all under the Conduct of this your Head and Captain ; Who will Now present you to His Father *even before the presence of His Glory*, with exceeding Joy !

Rom. 16. 20.

1st Th. 10. 24.

Rev. 18. 6.

Cor. 6. 3.

Jude. ver. 24.

[11]

That Christ gave Himself a Ransom for the Elect: Or. The Redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, was peculiarly designed for Elect Persons.

The Most High, who divided to the Nations their Inheritance, He gave the Elect to Christ, as His portion: And though Satan (through their ill husbandry in *Adam*) hath got a temporary Mortgage upon them ; yet the Fee-simple, or Right of Inheritance, remains in Christ : and therefore, at the year of Jubilee (that is, in the time appointed by the Father) they return to Him as the Right heir, though not without both Conquest and full Price.

By [*Christ's giving Himself a Ransom*] I understand the whole of His humiliation ; What ever He Did or Suffered ,

as

as *Manner*, from His Incarnation to His Resurrection : All which are Summarily express'd by [*the blood of his* Eph 1.7. *cross*] as all the *precious fruits* of His death, are by [*Forgiveness of Sin*] coll. 1.11. This was the price wherewith He bought them that should be Saved. *Election* is the Original Patern ; according to which, the line and compass of *Redemption* is to be measured : *The Son can do nothing, but what He sees the Father do*, Joh. 5. 19.

To make *Redemption* larger than *Election* love, is to Overlay the Foundation ; and what is so built, will surely suffer loss : It therefore behoves us to see, That we separate not what God hath conjoin'd, either by stretching or straightening the Bounds He hath set. The Jews were opinion'd, That the Promise of the *Messiah* belong'd only to Them, exclusive to the Gentiles : Others since, would extend it to *all* the Sons of Men *universally and alike* ; (Not considering the Reason why the Promise was made to the *Woman's* seed, and not to *Adam's*.) But the *Messiah* Himself, who best knew the *End* of His Coming, and *Line* of the Promise ; exempteth none ; but extends it to all Nations indifferently : Yet so, as that He Restrains it to the *Elect* among them. These are called *His Seed*, and *the Travel of His Soul* ; with respect to whom, He should *make His Soul an Offering for Sin*. These also He terms *His Sheep*, and Himself the Good Shepherd, (as well He might) Whose *own* the Sheep are, and for whom He dy'd ; Joh. 10. 15, *I lay down my life for the Sheep*. And that He might not be taken to intend Those *only* of the Jewish Nation, He presently adds *And other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold, them also must I bring* : And the Evangelist sayes, in Chap. 11. That He should not die for that Nation *only*, but for the *Children of God* which are scattered abroad ; This he expresses by [*Gathering together*] which was the effect of His death, according to Ephes. 2. 13. Where they are said to be *made nigh by the blood of Christ* ; and that He *Reconciled both* (i. e. Jews and Gentiles, or The *Elect* scattered among *both*) *unto God, in one body by the Cross* ; according to the Father's Compact made with Him, and Recorded in Isa. 49. 6. It also ap-

Isa. 53. 10.

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pears by *Isa.* 53. that they were [*Sheep*] whose iniquities were laid upon *Christ*, ver. 6. And again ver. 8, For the transgression of [*my People*] was He stricken: (Where note, That we do not find any party of Men termed *Sheep*, the *People of God*, and His *Children*, in distinction from Others, but with respect to some peculiar Interest He hath in them above others : And what that Interest may be, excepting Election, doth not appear to us; For those other *Sheep* were not yet Called, and therefore not yet Believers, and *Sheep* on that account; but as they were of Gods Elect.

For though *All Men* were lost, *Christ* was not sent but to the lost *Sheep* of the [*House of Israel*] that is, Those Persons of the lost and perishing world, whom God had chosen for His *Peculiars*, as He did the *House of Israel* from among the Nations; and who in that respect, were a special type of the *Spiritual Election*. And on this account, the Promises of the *New Covenant* were made to the Church under such Names and Titles as were proper to that People as distinguished from other Nations.

In *Isa.* 62. We find [*Holy*] and [*Redeemed*] applied to the same persons: Whether it be meant of *Elective Holiness* or *Actual*, it comes to One; For, both of them, together with *Redemption*, do refer to the same Subject: For, as *Actual Sanctification* is the Fruit and Consequent of *Redemption*; so, *Election* is the Root of them both; as ye have it in 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*. To be *Holy*, is to be sacred, selected, and set apart for holy uses, by appointment of God; And they were *Actually* sanctified by the *sprinkling of blood*: In both which respects, the People of *Israel*, the *Tabernacle*, *Temple*, *Priests*, *Altars*, &c. are all said to be *Holy*.

In *Luke* 1. 72. God's sending of *Christ* is said to be, *In performance of His Holy Covenant*; which was first proclaim'd in *Paradise*, as made with the *Womans Seed*; and afterwards renewed with *Abraham*; and is therefore term'd, *The Mercy promised to Abraham and to His Seed*: And who are *Abraham's Seed*? Not the *World*, but *Believers*; that is, *The Elect*: For, *These* only obtain Faith, *Rom.* 11. 7. And *Gal.*

He'. 9. 19 - 23.

Gen. 3. 15.

Gen. 12. 3.

Gal. 3. 29. Saith plainly, *If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed: and Rom. 9. 8.*

In *Tit. 2.* we read, That it was a *Peculiar* People, that Christ gave Himself for and purchased; i. e. A People peculiarly *His Own*: It denotes some *special propriety* He hath in *Them* above *Others*: and so, a special Cause for His giving Himself for *them*. We also find, That [*Peculiar* and *Purchased*] are so nearly allied, that *one* word is used to signify both; *1 Pet. 2. 9.*

According with this, is that in the *1 Pet. 1. 20.* where Christ is said to be *Manifested* for those He writes that Epistle to: That they were persons *Elected*, is evident by the *1. and 2. v. r.* And *Elect* unto the *sprinkling of His blood*: And as they were *Elected* to it, so in the *17. John*, He professes to make it good, *For their sakes* (says Christ) *I sanctifie myself*; and twice in the *10. John*, That, *He laid down His life for the Sheep*; Which is perfectly exclusive of others, as where He saith, *My Righteousness extendeth unto the Saints*; and *but'at believeth shall be Saved*; that is, Such, and None else.

ver. 19.
ver. 11, 15.

It also appears from *Acts 20. 28.* That it was *the [Church] of God, that He purchased with His own blood*. Now, the *Church* and the *World*, are plainly distinct, as a *Garden inclosed* is from the *Common Fields*. That the *Church* consists of *Elect persons*, is proved afore; and that it was the *Church* He dyed for, is proved by this Scripture; As also, from *Ephs 5. 25*, Where *Husbands* are required to love their *Wives*, as *Christ loved the Church*, and [*gave Himself for it*:] which shews, That as the *Husband's* love to his *Wife*, is *another kind* of love, than what he bears to others of the same *Sex*; So is *Christ's* love to His *Church*; and therefore, His death, which was the special effect of that His love, is peculiar to the *Church* only.

In *Revel. 5.* we Read that the *Elders* sing a *New Song* to the *Lamb*, because *He Redeemed them to God by His blood*, ver. 9. Among other Reasons for that *Stile* of *Elders*, this may be one, That they *were Chosen from the dayes of old*; (*For, their Names were written in His book of life from the*

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the foundation of the World, Rev. 1. 8.) They are also said to be Redeemed [*out of*] every Kindred, and tongue, and People and Nation; which Rationally implies, That the *Bulk* of those People and Nations were not Redeemed with them. And again in the 1. *Ch.* A certain Number are said to be Redeemed [*from the Earth*] and [*from among Men* :] If *Some* from among *Others*, It follows of course, That those *Others* were exempted. (Here note by the way, That these Elders were now in Heaven, above the Clouds of misconception and prejudic'd Opinion; and therefore, no Reason to misdoubt their testimony.) And further, These Redeemed Ones are there also stiled, *The First Fruits unto God and to the Lamb*; which appellation insinuates, That they were separated from the Rest, as the First Fruits under the Law were, by God Himself, Who took them for His Own portion, *Numb. 18. 13.* and *Chap. 8. 16.* They are likewise said, To have the *Father's name written in their Foreheads*, *Rev. 14. 1.* (Election marked them out for Christ) And to be written in the Lamb's Book of life; and that as a Lamb slain, *Rev. 13. 8.* And on that account says to His Father; *Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me*, *Joh. 17. 6.* Where also in His prayer for those whose Sacrifice He was now to offer, He stiles them, *The Men which the Father had given Him [out of the World]* And in *ver. 10,* *All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine* : i. e. All that were Christ's in order to Redemption, were first the Father's by Election: It is as if He had said, All that I undertake for, are Thine Elect: And All Thine Elect I undertake for: He therefore reciprocates the terms of Relation, Turns them to and again, To shew the *Sameness* of the Persons concerned in *both*. From all which it seems undeniably evident, That as a certain Number were *Elected*; so a Certain Number, and Those the very same Persons, were *Redeemed*.

The Ground and Truth of this Assertion, is further confirm'd by such Arguments as these:

- Arg. 1.* I. The Levitical Sacrifices were offered for the House of Israel, exemptive of other Nations; (Save only such as became

became Profelytes :) And These being a Type of the *Spiritual Election*, It follows That this Sacrifice of Christ (typified by Theirs) was also Peculiar to *Jews in Spirit*; or Spiritual Jews. So, *Aarons's* making atonement for his *Household*, and bearing the names of the *twelve Tribes* on his breast-plate, were typical of our Great High Priest's bearing the Names and sustaining the persons of *those* for whom He offered Himself on the Cross. Of all those legal shadows, Christ and the Church of the first-born, are the Body and Substance.

II. The *Right of Redemption* among the Jews (which shadowed this) was founded on *Brotherhood*: Hence I infer, That *that* Relation (spiritually taken) was both the *Ground* and *Limit* of Christ's office as a Redeemer. The Apostle's discourse in *Heb. 2.* seems to point at this; where he says They were *Brethren, Children, and Sons*, whom Christ should deliver from bondage; Make Reconciliation for their Sins, and bring to Glory. But, how came they to be God's Children and Brethren to Christ, *above others*? It was by *Predestination*; and That was it entitled them to Redemption; as is evident by comparing the 5 and 7 verses of *Eph. 1.* Having predestinated us to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ; In whom we have [Redemption] through His blood. And 'tis worthy your notice, That by the law of Redemption, a stranger (that is, One that was not of the Brotherhood) might not be Redeemed; But One that was, though he were not Redeemed, must yet go free in the year of Jubile: which *Levit. 25 46. & 48. with 41. &* shews the *peculiar respect* the Lord has for his *peculiar People.* 54

III. The *Saving benefits* of Redemption do not redound to any but *Elect persons*. What ever is one-where ascribed to Redemption, as the special fruit and consequent thereof; is else-where ascribed to Election, and to This as the first and Original Root: And, that Redemption it self is the Fruit of Electing love, is evident by the 1 Pet. 1. 2. (quoted afore) *Elect unto Obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* They are also said, to be *Blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as He had Chosen them in Him*: And *Eph. 1. 3. 4.* if all spiritual blessings be dispensed by the Law of Election;

Job. 17. 6.

Math. 13. 34.
or 36. ver

Arg. 4.

Job. 12. 39.

Election; then all the saving benefits of Redemption (which are the same with those of Election) must be dispensed by the same Rule; and so, to the same persons onely. We also find, That Christ's actual distribution of the Gifts He received for Men, is guided answerably: *He manifests the Father's name to the Men He had given Him [ut] of the world: To These He expounds that in private, which to others He spake in parables: And thus He did, Because to them it was given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to the Multitude it was not given; And Election was That as gave it them, (as it followes there) For So it seemed good in thy sight.* In like manner, the Apostle in Rom. 8. puts Election and Redemption together, as pertaining to the same persons; And Justification (which is the next effect of Redemption) he makes also an unquestionable consequent of Election: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who shall condemn? It is Christ that dyed.* The question being put concerning God's Elect, and the Answer referring to those for whom Christ dy'd; is a plain implication, That Redemption and Justification are commensurate with Election; That either of them concerneth onely the same persons; and that neither of them extends to any, but whom the other also taketh-in.

I V. The price of Redemption was of that Precious and Matchless Value, that it could not be parted-with, but with respect to the Certainty of the End for which it was paid. Now the End of Redemption was the Salvation of Men; below Which there could not be an End worthy the death of Christ; And This Nothing could secure but Election; The Elect alwaies have obtain'd, and shall: This is a Rule affirm'd in Rom: 11. 7. But for the Rest, they are blinded; that is, They are left to their own voluntary Misunderstanding; And being so, Not only they Do not, but they cannot believe. And to what end should Christ make His Precious Soul an Offering for Such! Men that never shall believe; and consequently never be Saved? Surely To no better purpose than for the World of ungodly, whose Spirits were in prison two thousand years afore.

afore. Those whom the Lord intends to save alive, He appoints an Atonement to be made for them; But for those *Numb. 16.* He intends to kill, (which is alwaies done justly) He will *ver. 46, 47.* not accept an Offering, and therefore not appoint it; As He *Judg. 13:23* did not (under the Law) for those Crimes which Men were to dye for.

V. I confine Redemption to Elect persons, because *Inter-Arg. 5.* *cession* (which is of equal latitude with *Redemption*) is limited to *These* exclusive to *Others*. The Priests of old, were to pray for those whose sacrifice they offered; And what they did, was a pattern of our Saviour's Priestly office; Whom likewise we finde to Sacrifice and pray, *onely* for the *same* persons: He is an *Advocate* for those for whose sins He is a *Propitiation*, *1 Joh. 2:1.* Whose transgressions He was *smitten* for, For them He makes *Intercession*, *Ila. 53:8,* *12.* For *their* sakes He Sanctified Himself, and for *Them* it was that He made that solemn prayer in the *17,* of John. And He now *prayer* for them, as being just now *to-offer their Sacrifice:* He also shuts out the World expressly from having any interest in it, *I pray not for the World, but for them which Thou hast given Me.* And He adds the Reason (the foundation Reason) why He would pray for *These*, [*For, they are Thine*] *i.e.* They were the Father's by *Election*: For, in all other respects the Earth is the Lord's, and the Fullness thereof.

VI. This Doctrine is further Warranted, by those *Genu-Arg. 6.* *ine* and *Necessary* Conclusions, which follow from divers expresse Scriptures touching this Subject; As 1. That those who are planted with Christ in His death, shall be also in His Resurrection, *Rom. 6. 5.* 2. That those for whom Christ was Crucified, their old Man was Crucified with Him; That the body of sin should be destroyed, *Rom. 6. 6.* 3. That those dead with Christ, are freed from sin; and shall appear with Him in Glory, *Rom. 6. 7.* and *Coll 3:3, 4.* 4. That those for whom Christ dy'd, are Justified and Reconciled, *Rom. 5:8, 9, 10.* 5. That for whom He was made sin and a Curse, They are made the Righteousness of God in Him, *2 Cor. 5:21.* 6. They that are Redeemed, do

follow the Lamb ; and are made Kings and Priests unto God,
Rev. 5. 9, 10. Chap. 14. 3, 4.

All which blessings (with many the like) are the inseparable fruits of Redemption. But it is obvious to all, That *all* men are not like unto Christ in Newness of life : *All* have not the body of sin destroyed in them : *All* are not freed from sin : Nor shall *All* appear with Christ in Glory : *All* are not Justified and Reconciled : *All* are not made the Righteousness of God in Christ : *All* do not follow the Lamb : Nor are *All* made Kings and Priests unto God : Whence it should follow, That *All* are not Redeemed.

Arg. 7.

Tit. 2. 14.

VII. Another Argument for Peculiar Redemption, is founded on the End of Christ's death, with the Merit and Efficacy of it : He gave Himself, That He might Redeem those He dyed for, from *all* iniquity : Hence it follows, That if Christ dyed for all, then *All* shall be saved ; (for iniquity only can be their Ruin) Or else, That Christ fails of the End of his Death. But, Christ cannot fall short of His End in dying ; For, all power in Heaven and Earth is committed to Him, for the Making of it good : And yet, *All* Men are not saved : (The Saved Ones are but a Remnant) Therefore He gave not Himself to Redeem *All*.

It is the Father's will, That of *All* He hath given to Christ He should lose Nothing ; but should give them Eternal life : Hence it follows ; Either, That *all* men were not thus given to Christ ; or if they were, Then *All* must have Eternal life ; And if they have Not, The Father's Will is Not done : But, The Father's Will is done ; (as is abundantly evident) and yet, All men are not saved : Therefore, -

That which Christ layed down His life for, That He Merited ; And what He Merited, is due to those for whom it was Merited : (*He was not cut off for Himself.*) Now, The Principal thing intended and Merited by the death of Christ was the Justification of Sinners ; And That God might be Just in Justifying of them. If therefore He Merited this for *All*, then *All* must be Justified ; and it cannot be justly denied to *Any* : For, it is their due by virtue of a Price ; which also was paid to that very end ; and this, by God's own appointment.

Rom. 3. 26.

pointment; *Who* (we know) *cannot condemn any for whom Christ died*: His Justice shall not be liable to such a Rejection. Whence it seems to be safely concluded; That if All men are not *Justified*, justification doth not belong to all; and consequently, That Christ did not give Himself for *All*. And as touching *Efficacy*; *Adam's* transgression was efficacious on the Will, and whole Man to *Deprave*, why not (then) the *Righteousness* of Christ to *Restore*; since the *Preheminence*, in that very thing, is given to Him? Rom. 5. 17. Rom. 8. 34.

VIII. The Doctrine of *Speacial* and *Peculiar* Redemption is further confirm'd by those *Inglorious* and *hurtful* Consequents which do attend the Doctrine of *General* Redemption (as it is commonly held forth) which (1) seems to reflect on the *Wisdom* of God, as imputing to Him *such* a Contrivance for Men's Salvation, as was altogether *frustrable*. (2) It also seems to tax God of *Injustice*; as Not discharging Those whose transgressions are answer'd for by their Surety; or else, That the Sufferings of Christ were not *sufficient* to make a Discharge *due* to them? Or (3) It insinuates a deficiency of *Power*, or want of *goodwill*, to prosecute His design to perfection: (4) It suspends the virtue and success of all that *Christ* hath done for Men, upon something to be done by *themselves*, which He is not the Doer of; and consequently, that Men are *Principals* in procuring their own Salvation: And so, Christ shall have but His Thousands (in truth His Nothings) whiles Freedom of Will shall have its Ten Thousands to cry up the praise of Men: This is not *That the Lord alone should be exalted*. (5) It would also follow, That those who are Saved and gone to Heaven, have nothing more of Christ's to glory in, and to praise Him for, than those, who are perished and gone to Hell: For, according to the Principles of *General* Redemption, He did and doth for all alike; and not a jot more for the one party than for the other. (6) It makes Men presumptuous and carnally secure. How many have sooth'd-up themselves in their impenitency and hardness of Heart, and fenced themselves against the Word; upon this very Supposition, That Christ

Arg. 8

Isa. 53. 8.

A Practical Discourse

died for all, and therefore for them : And why then should not they look to be saved as well as any other? and so they lean (pretendedly) on the Lord and transgress : Not considering, that those for whom Christ died, He purchased for them a freedom from sin, and not a liberty of Sinning; Nor impunity, but upon terms of Faith and Repentance. And that the Tempter disturbs them not in their rest upon such a foundation, may be a principal Reason why Men so stiffly adhere to it; and that those of the *General* principle are so seldom troubled with terrours of Conscience.

But yet, (notwithstanding all this) it is not denied, that all Men, even those that never heard of Christ's Redemption, have benefit by His death, (and more might have, did they not stand in their own light) albeit He had not, in His death, the same respect to *all* as to *some*. The mix'd Multitude that came up with *Israel*, It was not for *them* that *Moses* was sent to *Pharaoh*, That the Sea was divided, and the *Egyptians* drowned; That the Rock followed the Camp, and that they had *Mannah* from Heaven, &c. though these being in company with *Israel*, had a share in those outward benefits. So the Lord gives water in the Wilderness; by which the *Beasts* and *Owls* have benefit, in their kind; and yet it is not for *their* sakes that the Lord doth it; but for His *People*, His *Chosen*, Those whom He had *formed for Himself*.

I should now come to the Inferences : But finding this Doctrine of *Peculiar Redemption* as much opposed as that of *Election*, and upon the same grounds : Observing also a great readiness in Men to embrace the Notion of *General Redemption*; (which proceeds partly from Nature's unbleness to discern a Reason why One Man should be Redeemed, and not Another : Partly, for that it is grateful to lapsed Nature to fancy it self *active* in its own Recovery : Partly also, from an aptness to catch at any thing that pretends to give quiet under Convictions.) I hope it shall not be time lost to see their exceptions against Our Doctrine; What they alledge in defence of their own; and how groundless in both. In the doing of which, I shall take
but

But the substance of what I have heard, and not intermeddle with jangling disputes.

Is it not plain by Rom. 5. 14, 15. That the Restoration by Christ is as large and extensive as Adam's sin?

The Comparison there stated, is Not put Extensively (i. e. in respect of the objects of Sin and Grace) but Intensively; (i. e. in respect of the different efficacy of the several Means by which these several Effects are produced. The Apostle therefore (to obviate such objections) Restrains it in ver. 15, *But not as the offense, so also is the free Gift: i. e. The Free Gift of Righteousness and life doth not extend to Men Universally and Efficaciously, as sin and death did: And he gives the Reason of it; For, if through the offense of One Many be dead; Much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, hath abounded unto Many: q. d. If the Free Gift had took in All, as the offense did, Then All must have been Saved; For that, Grace hath abounded more than the offense: (Which must be Meant of the powerfull and prevalent efficacy of Grace: For, as to the Objects, It could not take in more than All) And therefore, those towards whom it hath thus abounded, shall surely partake of the benefits of it: As All in Adam dy'd, so All in Christ shall be made alive.*

But if some onely are Redeemed, And Those but a Few in Comparison; Then all ground of Believing is taken away from the most of Men?

1. The Makers of this Objection will not say That All Men are Saved; albeit they hold, That All are Redeemed: And therefore to hold and affirm That Christ did not Dye for All; hinders None from believing, any more, than That Many of Those He dyed for, are not Saved: yea To teach That Christ dyed for all, and that yet the Generality of Men shall dye in their sins and Perish for ever, is a greater impediment to believing, than to teach That He dyed onely for Some, and that every One of this [Some] shall certainly be Saved.

2. He

2. He that will know his own particular Redemption before he will Believe, begins at the wrong end of his Work ; and is very unlikely to come (that way) to the knowledge of it. The first Act of Faith is not, That *Christ dyed for All*, or *for you in particular* : The One is not true ; the other not certain to you, Nor can be, till after you have believed : He that would live, Must submit to Mercy, with [*Peradventure*] *He will save me alive.*

3. There are Reasons enough, and of great weight, to induce Men to believe, without laying *General* Redemption for the *Ground* of their Faith : As

1 Tim. 1. 15.

(1) That faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Jesus Christ came to save *Sinners* ; and such are *you*.

Math. 20. 28.

(2) That He gave His Life a Ransome for *Many* ; and you may be of that Number as well as Another.

Rom. 5. 8, 9.
Phil. 1. 29.

(3) That those He died for, shall be Justified upon their believing ; and shall have Faith also upon their seeking for it, as a part of His Purchase, and given on His behalf.

(4) That to Believe on His Son, is the will and Commandment of the Everlasting God ; Whom we ought to obey, although our Salvation were not dependent on it. Rom. 16. 26. 1 John 3. 23.

(5) Those many faithful Promises assuring Salvation to them that believe ; Mark 16. 16. Job. 3. 16, 36. Chap. 6. 47. Matth. 11. 29. And

(6) Lastly, The Remediless danger of unbelief ; *He that believes not shall be Damned* ; as Mark 16. 16. Job. 8. 24. &c. And, if such Considerations as these, will not prevail with you to believe ; the Notion of *General* Redemption, together with the general *successfulness* of it (to be sure) will never do it.

Redemption is often set forth in terms that import a Universality : As, That Christ takes away the Sin of the World : That He is the propitiation for the Sins of the whole World, &c.

The word *World* hath many and various acceptations in Scripture : It is not alwayes meant of *Men*, but some-

Something else : And when *Men* are intended, it seldom intends the *Universality* of them ; yea 'tis often understood of a very few in comparison of the whole : It would therefore be very great Rashness, to appropriate or limit so general a term to any particular Sense ; and much more, if extended to Men Universally ; as is shewn, in part, by the following Instances.

1 The word [World] is taken for the place of Mens habitation upon earth : *Nabum. 1. 5, The earth is burnt up at His presence ; yea, the [World] and all that dwell therein.*

2 For the Inhabitants of the World, good and bad together, *Psal. 9. 8, He shall judge the World in Righteousness.*

3 For the Things of the world, and dispositions answerable to them : *Eccles. 3. 11, He hath set the World in their heart.*

4 For the time of the Worlds continuance from one Remarkable period to another : The time before the flood is called the old world ; and the time of Christ's Kingdom, the world to come.

5 The particular time of a Mans life upon Earth ; *Mat. 12. 32. Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, in this World ; Nor in the World to come.*

6 For the extent or Compass of the Roman Empire ; *Luke 2. 1, There went a Decree from Caesar Augustus, That all the World should be taxed.*

7 For the time, and state of things, after the dissolution of the present frame ; *Luke 20. 35, They that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Resurrection, &c.*

8 For the Religion and Manners of the World : *Acts 17. 6, These that have turned the World upside-down are come hither.*

9 For the troubles which Christ's Disciples meet with in the World : *Joh. 16. 33, Be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World.*

10 For the splendour ; honour ; wealth ; pleasure ; or whatever else in the World, is taking with the hearts of

Men : *Gal. 6. 14, I am Crucified to the World, and the World to Me.*

11 To set forth the greatness of something that cannot well be exprest : *Job. 21. 25, The World it self could not contain the books that should be written.*

12 For the Gentiles in distinction from the Jews : *Rom. 11. 12, If the fall of them (that is, the Jews) be the riches of the World, &c.*

13 For the Multitudinous increase of some particular Party : *Job. 12. 19, The World is gone after Him.*

More of this kind might be cited ; But these may suffice to shew, How much it behoves to consider well the scope and Context of Scripture ; and Not to be led by the Vocal sound of words.

There are yet, two other Senses of the word [World] which come nearest the Matter in hand : -- One is that which takes in the whole party of Wicked Men alone, and by themselves ; As where it is said , *The Saints shall judge the World* : It must be intended of the *World of ungodly* ; For, the Saints shall not Judge one another. That *All the World wondred after the Beast , And worshipped the Dragon* : This also must be meant of the Herd of Idolaters, exemptive of Those who followed the Lamb. And again , *The [whole World] lyeth in wickedness* : Here ye have the very words, and in the same Manner connex'd, as in the place objected ; which therefore may well be supposed to be of as large a Comprehension : And yet, it cannot be meant of the *Universality* of Mankind ; But, of such of them as are under the power and conduct of Satan ; which the Saints are not ; and so, cannot be any part of the [World] or [whole World] there intended.

The other sense of the Word , seems Couched , in the places objected ; where Christ is said, To take away the sin of the *World* ; And to be a Propitiation for the sins of the *whole World* : For it seems Agreeable to Reason, to understand the word in a Restrict and limited sense here, as in the places above-quoted. For, if by [World] is sometimes meant The World of *Ungodly*, as separate from the *Saints* :

By

1 *Cor. 6. 2.*

Rev. 13. 3, 4.
Ch 14. 4.

1 *Job. 5. 19.*

By like Reason, at other times, It may be meant of the World of *Saints* as seperate from the *Wicked*, especially, when there is Nothing in the Context and scope of the place, to Contradict it. And what then should hinder but that the word [World] in the places objected, may be sely intended of the [World of *Elect*] exclusive of *Others*, As the [World that lies in wickedness] is of those *Others* exclusive of the *Elect*? To be sure, There can be no peril in so understanding it: For, we know that Christ is the Propitiation for *their* sins: But, To affirm it of the *whole* of Mankind, as it hath no solid foundation; so many uncomly, and unruly Consequents do attend it: some of which are shewn afore.

To end this Debate, I would ask the Objector, What World it was that *Christ would not pray for*? For, by knowing *that*, it may be gather'd, What World it was that He *died for*. It could not be *That* for which He would not Pray; For, the Priest was bound to pray for Those for whom he offered. It must then be *Another*; And so, it seems, there be *two* Worlds.

1 A *lesser* World, which consists of *Elect* Persons, and was taken out of the *World Universal*: (As the *Israelitish* Nation was out of the *Egyptian*; *Deut.* 4. 34. Or, as the Christian Church at first was out of the *Jewish*:) *These* our Saviour stiles, *The Men which His Father gave Him* [out of the World:] For *These* it was that He sanctified Himself; And for these He *prayed*: And of *These* consisteth that World whose Sin He taketh away; and for whose Sins (even of the *whole* of it) He is the *Propitiation*. These are the Men that shall be counted worthy of the World to come; And they are as properly termed a *World*, as that blessed Place and State they shall be in: Or, as the *Dwellers* upon earth are denominated a *World*, from the Place of their habitation, *Pf.* 9. 8.

2 There is also a *World* of *Ungodly*, from among whom that *lesser World* are taken and seperated; Of whom it is said, *The Devil is their God*; And that their Names are not in the *Lambs book of life*: But, the *whole* of it lies in wickedness:

Joh. 17. 6.

v. 9.

Luke 20. 35.

Joh. 15. 19.

ch. 17. 6.

2 *Cor.* 4. 4.

Rev. 13. 3 & 4.

with v. 8.

1 *Joh.* 5. 19.

edness: And, *This* is the World for whom Christ would not vouchsafe to pray: Then surely He would not make His Soulan offering for their sins.

The Reason why all Men are not Saved, is not because Christ did not die for all; but because they will not Believe?

Men's Not believing in Christ, is not the *Only*, or *first*, procuring Cause of their Condemnation; but their Rebellion and Apostacy from God: Albeit, the Condemnation of those who reject Christ, is greatly aggravated by their Not-receiving Him: As One Condemned, or Condemnable, for an Act of Treason, refusing a Pardon; His Refusal is (indeed) the next and immediate cause of his execution, and perhaps shall heighten the Rigour of it: But, his treasonable practise was the first procuring cause of his death: which also he should have suffered for, if no such pardon had been tendred to him. It must always be granted and Maintained, That Faith is the one thing necessary on our part, in order to our being Saved: And as true it is, That this Faith adds nothing of *virtue* or *Merit* to the Cross of Christ. Where Men are said to be Justified, or Saved, by Faith; it is meant of the *Object* of Faith, and not of the *Act*: For, the Righteousness of Christ *alone* is the *Matter* of our Justification; which this Objection seems to deny.

1 Joh. 3. 8.

Tit. 2. 14.

2 Christ's Redemption extends to Unbelief: *For this Purpose was the Son of God Manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*: Of which, *Unbelief* is the Chief. And He gave Himself to Redeem from [all] iniquity: And if from *All*, then Unbelief (which is the *Sum* and *Scum* of all) cannot be exempted: For, Otherwise (*scil.* If He had Redeemed from all but this) that Redemption would litle avail us; It would be, as if One should purchase your pardon for pilfering felonies; but let the Guilt of your Treasons lye still upon you: Or, undertake to Cure a Man of his phrensie, upon condition he will be Sober! What will they do, who content themselves with such a Redemption as this!

3 Faith it self is a Grace of Christ's own Working; It flows

flows from His Fulness: He apprehends us *before* we do or *Joh. 1. 16.*
 can apprehend Him. The People's Sins under the Law, had
 not been expiated by the Sacrifice without sprinkling the
 blood; And it was not *themselves* who sprinkled it, but the
Priest: And can we think that Christ shed His Blood for
 those on whom He will not sprinkle it? That He died
 for Those to whom He will not give a little faith; when
 as without *that*, all that He doth *besides* will not profit
 them? If any say; He would, but they will not: I an-
 swer, This [*Will not*] is their Unbelief; which He is
 to take away by [*making them Willing*] A Will to be-
 lieve is Believing; And in the day of His Power they find *ps. 110*
 it. And for any to say, That a *Will to believe*, is not pur-
 chased by Christ; is a great derogation from the virtue and
Heb. 9. 12-14.
 Merit of His sufferings. This is further Argued, where
 the Office of Christ, in order to Effectual Calling, is
 treated of.

Inferences.

From what hath been proved in behalf of Redemption, as
peculiar to the Elect, I infer,

I. The important necessity of Trying the Spirits, and *Infer. 1.*
 the Doctrines they bring, whether they be of God. A plau-
 sible outside, and fair shew in the flesh, ar: no Argument
 of Truth in the bottom. Takingness with Nature, should
 Render things suspicious to us, rather than approved. Our
 best rule of Judgement in this case, is that of our Saviour;
The Tree is known by its fruits. And if by *this* we measure
 the *general point*, it will be found wanting in what it pre-
 tends to, and not-a-little Reprovable.

1. In stead of Magnifying the Grace of Christ, and Mer-
 it of His sufferings, it does (in effect) Nullifie both. It
 makes Redemption general as to *Persons*, but not as to
Things: That is, it Redeems the whole of Mankind from *part*
 of their bondage; but no part of them from the *whole* of
 it;) Or upon such a Condition as no Man in nature is able to
 perform: which (sure) is too defective to be the Devise of
 Sovereign Wisdom and Grace: That cannot be call'd An-

Universal Remedy that suffers it self to be Worsted by the disease. I doubt not at all, That the blood of the Son of God in our Nature, is of infinite Merit ; but withall, that is of like Infinite Virtue and Efficacy ; and will for ever operate accordingly. But, if the success and saving effects thereof should depend upon something to be done by Men, which Redemption it self doth not Invest them with ; then will Men come in for a share with Christ, in the glory of their Salvation : yea, in this case, any addition of humane ability, annihilates the Grace of Christ ; *Gal. 5. 2.* Whereas, to depend upon Christ for Sanctification as well as Righteousness ; To expect from Him a Power to Repent and Believe, as well as Acceptance upon your believing, gives Him His true honour, as intitling Him to the whole of your Salvation ; which is (indeed) His proper Due, and due to Him alone. And this may be a main Reason, why Men professing the Name of Christ are so generally strangers to Faith and Holiness : They do not seek it at the hands of Christ as a part of His purchase, according to *John 5. 40.*

2. In stead of laying a foundation for Faith, and an help to believing ; the General Doctrine nuzzles the Soul in its unbelief upon a presumption of Power in himself to believe when he will. We little think how much presumption and carnal security derive from this Root : whereas Peculiar Redemption in the vigour and latitude of it, (viz. as procuring us a Right to Faith and Holiness, with the Spirit of Christ to work them effectually in us ;) is a far greater encouragement to apply our selves to Christ for them, as a part of His purchase ; and that without which we cannot partake the other benefits of His death. And I cannot but think, that any Man in His right mind, (upon a due enquiry, and thorow considering the Matter) would rather depend upon such a Redemption, as redeems from all iniquity ; (though the persons concern'd in that Redemption, be but few) than on that which is supposed to Redeem All universally upon condition of Faith and Repentance, but does not Redeem from impenitency and unbelief. In That Redemp-

Phil. 1. 29.

tion

tion let my part be that saves from Sin; That slays the enmity; That Reconciles to God *effectually*; that makes an end of sin, and brings-in everlasting Righteousness; that does not onely bring into a Savable state *conditionally*; but *works* also, and *maintains* those Conditions and Qualifications, that have Salvation at the End of them.

II. Since your propriety in Redemption is founded on *Infer. 2.* your Interest in Electing love; Give all diligence to make your Election sure; Spare not for pains; It's fruit will be worth all the cost and labour you can bestow upon it: If cleer in this point, the whole body will be full of light. And, among other Evidences of Election, Look over those specified afore under that head. Then Make out your Interest in Redemption, by walking worthy of Redeeming love; which cannot be done, but by being and doing something *more than others*: Some *singular* thing it must be, that must warrant your claim to that singular *Priviledge*. Hold-forth therefore in your life, the effects of your Union with Christ in His death: As he gave Himself for you; so give up your self to Him. As He is for you; so, be you for Him (for Him only) and not for another: 2 Cor. 8. 5. *Hofea 3. 3.*

1. Determine to know nothing, but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified: Count all things else not worth your knowing, for in truth all knowledge, without this, will come to Nothing. Let all (therefore) be loss and dung, for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, *Phil. 3. 8.*

2. Let nothing be so dear to you, as not to part with it for God, when 'tis called for; and rise early to do it. *This is love, that we walk after His Commandments.* The Lord parted with His delight for you from Eternity: There's nothing more Reasonable, Nothing more Natural, to an heart rightly placed; than that you should love and live to Him, who died for you: And, whoever hath known the Grace of God, and the love of Christ, in truth; cannot but so judge. *2 Joh. 6.*

3. Let not Christ be Divided: Know Him for your Lord
af-

Rev 19. 14.

as well as your Redeemer; Take Orders from Him as your Captain General; Receive your Law from His Mouth; What ever He bids you do, Do it; Follow Him where ever He goes; and Carry it so as becomes His Attendants: The Armies in Heaven follow Him upon white Horses, and arrayed in white: Be not your own Director in any thing, Nor over-hasty; Stir not up your Beloved until He please; But Await His Counsel and Conduct, as preferring His knowledge of times and Seasons, with the manner and method of His Working and prescribing, before your own.

1 Cor. 6. 20.

Rom. 14. 8.

Infer. 3.

Heb. 9. 14

Job. 17. 21.

Job. 4. 10.

4. Let Nothing divide you from Christ: Let Nothing but death, yea, let not death it self, separate between you and Him. Nothing (you see) could separate Him from you; yea, had it not been for you, and such as you are, He had not dyed. *We are not our own, we are bought with a price;* which is the highest engagement, in every state and Duty; whether living or dying, *to be the Lord's.*

III. Christs giving Himself a Ransom for you: warrants your largest expectation of Good things from Him: What Sins too great to be pardoned? or iniquities so stubborn as not to be subdued? or Graces so precious, as not to be obtained? The Lord delights in nothing more than Mercy; The only Bar was Sin; which being dissolved by the blood of Christ, Grace and Glory run freely. The making us Kings and Priests unto God, yea, *One in the Father and Himself,* being the thing He dyed for; no inferiour good thing can be withholden from us. *Faith and Holyness* are great things (indeed) and highly to be valued: yet let me say, That even these and all other good things, when layed together, will be but a very little heap to that Grace which put us into Christ; the honour and priviledge of Union with Him; and the price He hath paid for our Ransom: Herein is Love that God sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins: The Purchase is paid; Releases are Sealed; and He in possession; All things are ready: It is now but His Giving forth the Revenue that lies by Him; which also He delights to do.

IV. This

IV . This Doctrine also prepares a Chief corner Stone for the Saints Perseverance. They for whom Christ died, died with Him ; and if dead with Him, they shall live with Him ; *Rom. 6. 8.* Even the *Righteousness* of God is engaged to *Save* them ; and then He must either prevent, Remove, or Over-rule, what ever would hinder that Salvation. Therefore unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory and dominion, *Rev. 1. 5, 6.* for ever and ever, *Amen.*

[III]

That the purpose and end of Christ's death cannot be frustrate : Or

Those whom Christ dyed for, cannot miss of the benefits accruing by His death.

All the Councils of God from eternity ; All His promises and Declarations holding forth those Councils, and all His Dispensations in order to their accomplishment, have a special relation to Christ as dying for His people ; and their actual Salvation thereby, as the end thereof.

Now, the *End* of a Thing is *that* for which the Thing it self, is ; and but for which, it had not been : 'tis *that* the Chief Agent principally proposeth, and aims at : and if he be wise, he will certainly use and appoint such *Means*, and Order them in such *manner*, that the thing designed shall not miscarry.

Men (indeed) may miss of their End: They aim at *This*, and *That's* produced ; (as in building the Tower of *Babel* :) But this is still from some imperfection in themselves ; Either the Thing it self is *not feasible* ; Or the way to it is *imprudently contriv'd* ; or the Means *unduely* applied ; their minds *alter* ; or they are made to desist by a power above them, &c. But, *God* only wise and Almighty, it is not so with Him ; None of those things, which impede the designs of *Men*, can happen to *His* ; There can be no other Event of them, but what He setly intended : The least of

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His Purposes shall never suffer disappointment; much less that great Design of Men's Salvation by the Death of Jesus Christ: For,

1. The Thing it self is feasible: Millions of Souls are gon to Heaven on His accompt.
2. It was so wisely contrived, That all Interests concern'd are secured and satisfied; God is Just in Justifying; The Sinner saved, even whiles Vengeance is taken on his Sins; and Christ well pleased with a Seed to serve Him.
3. The way of obtainment is such as will certainly compass the End: The Divine Power is engaged in it, which rests not (in the least) on the concurrence or compliance of any frustrable Instrument.
4. His Heart cannot be taken off from it: It is That which His blessed thoughts have run upon from Eternity; and those *Thoughts* of His stand fast to all Generations. And,
5. No higher Power can supersede His Decree; He is Sovereign Lord, and controlleth all.

There be divers Arguments which readily offer to confirm the Matter in hand.

Arg. I.

I. The first is from the *Nature* and *Import* of Redemption: It was not the mere depositing of the Ransom demanded, as a pledge to secure the Creditor's Satisfaction, in case the Treaty took effect: Nor was it such a pledge as might be resum'd or paid-back, in case it succeeded not: Neither yet was the Price of that undervalue and imperfection as to need the addition of any thing from without it self, to make it effectual: But such a Price it was, so paid, so accepted, and so qualified, as for ever concludes all Parties and Interests concern'd in it. It was in all respects Adequate to, and worthy of, the Purchase design'd by it. *Redemption* is a term of large comprehension; It is next to *Election*, and carries in it *All* that Election hath Chosen us to: It does not barely make Men Releasable, or Capable of pardon: but the Actual and Eternal Deliverance from Sin, Satan, Death, and the Law; together with the full and perfect Salvation of

of Redeemed Ones, is included in it. And this is not barely affirm'd, but evident proof will make it good. A Witness or two for each of these.

1. The Redemption wrought by Christ imports Satisfaction: Without this, the World had not been Reconciled; Nor could it be said the pleasure of the Lord had prospered in His hand: But both these are affirm'd; Isa. 53. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 18, and 19. and Heb. 2. 17. expressly, That He made Reconciliation for the Sins of the People: Yea, our Grand Creditour proclaims Himself satisfied, by His sending from Heaven to Release our Surety.

2. Justification, or Deliverance from Guilt: Eph. 1. 7, In whom we have Redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of Sins. Gal. 3. 13, Christ hath Redeem'd us from the Curse of the Law; being made a Curse for us: He blots out the Hand-writing against us, Nailing it to His Cross, Col. 2. 14.

3. It imports the vanquishing and binding of the Strong Man; who would not else have let-go the Prey: By death He destroyed Him who had the power of death; that is, the Devil, Heb. 2. 14. By the blood of His Cross He spoiled Principalities, and Powers, and triumphed over them, Col. 2. 15.

4. Freedom from the power of sin: Rom. 6. 6, Our old Man was Crucified with Him, — that henceforth we should not serve Sin: Upon which it follows; Sin shall not have dominion over you, ver. 14.

5. Inherent Holiness, or Sanctification: Col. 1. 21, You that were sometimes enemies in your mind, now hath He reconciled; in the Body of His flesh through death, to present you Holy, &c. ver. 22. — We are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ; Heb. 10. 10. and Rom. 6. 18, Being then made free from Sin, ye became the Servants of Righteousness: And that it was by virtue of Christ's death, appears by ver. 8, For, if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with Him. Heb. 9. 14.

6. It likewise imports Resurrection: Joh. 6. 54, 55, I will raise Him at the last day; For my flesh is meat indeed, (that is, as Crucified) Christ dying, was the death of death; Hos. 13. 14.

-. It also extendsto the *actual* possessing of Redeemed ones, with *blessedness* and *Glory* : Rom. 8. 30. *Whom He justified, them He glorified.* Liberty of entring into the holiest, is by *the blood of Jesus*, Heb. 10. 19. and Rev. 5. 9, 10. *Thou hast Redeemed us unto God by thy blood ; and hast made us Kings and Priests :* (It is the voice of Those in Heaven.)

Now, *All these* are in Redemption, they proceed out of Christ's fulness as a *Redeemer* : And for this cause it was, that *Paul* cared not to know any thing but *Jesus Christ* and *Him Crucified*. It is true, That the Resurrection of Christ, His Ascension, Sitting at God's right hand, and Intercession have their respective influence into every of those particulars aforesaid ; but they all spring from His *Crucifixion* : If He had not dyed, He had not been a Priest for ever (as He is) after the order of *Melchisedeck*, Heb. 5. 12.

Arg. 2.

II. Another Argument is from the inestimable worth and dignity of the Ransom that was given : It was *the life of the Son of God* ; Matth. 20. 28. Heaven and Earth will bear no proportion in value to this price of Redemption : which therefore could not be parted-with for a doubtful or uncertain Purchase. In this lies the stress of the Apostle's Argument ; Who when He would set forth the happy estate of God's Elect, and prove them above the Reach of danger ; He doth it in two words, (but very significant ones) [*Christ hath dyed*] *Who shall condemn ? It is [Christ that dyed]* Rom. 8. 38. The Eminency of the Person, and the sufferings He submitted to ; as they greatly illustrate His love to Men ; So they strongly affirm and insure the event of His death : *If reconciled to God by the death of [His Son] much more Saved by His life*, Rom. 5. 10. It may truly be said of every one He died for, *He is just, He shall surely live.* But this in the same respect and sense, as those then unborn were said to be *sanctified* through the offering of the body of *Jesus Christ*, Heb. 10. 10. And their *Old Man* to be *crucified with Him* : Rom. 6. No Man is *actually* justified till he *actually* believes : But Repentance and Faith being purchased by Christ, for those He died for ; They shall

Ezek. 18. 9.

as certainly be made to Repent and Believe, as that Christ died for them, *Phil. 1. 29.*

III. The Righteousness of Christ is more prevalent and *Arg. 3.* effectual to His Seed, than Adam's transgression was to his : All his Posterity (indeed) fell under the Curse by it ; yet so, that there was still (through the Intervention of Grace) a possibility of Release : But the Righteousness of Christ hath so perfectly recovered and 'stablished His Seed, that their justified State can never be lost. And the Reason is, because Grace hath out-done Sin, and gone beyond it, *Grace hath abounded much more, Rom. 5. 20.* Which *super-abounding* of Grace, cannot refer to the Subjects of Grace, as if they were *more in number* than the Subjects of Sin ; (for, sin came upon *All*, and Grace cannot come upon *more* than all :) But 'tis meant of the *prevalent efficacy* of Grace ; and the *permanency* of its effects towards all that are the Subjects of it : And, thence it is, that Grace is said to *Reign*, and that to *Eternal life*. *Rom. 5. 21.*

IV. If the End of Christ's death might possibly be frustrated ; as possibly the very end of God's making the World, might suffer disappointment. All things were made for Himself ; and by this scale they ascend to Him ; The World for the Elect, The Elect for Christ, and Christ for God. All His works praise Him ; but above all, that of Redemption, as of highest note and eminency. Most conspicuously doth the Glory of God shine forth in the face of Christ as *Dying* ; and as dying for *such an End* ; (viz. the Salvation of His People :) It is the chief of the ways of God, the very Meridian and height of His Glory, (not essential, but manifestative) both in this world, and that to come. It therefore behoved Him so to lay it, that of all his designs, *This* might be sure to succeed. For, do but subtract the *sureness* of its Effect ; and leave His Redeem'd in a *perishable* condition ; and it draws a *blemish* instead of *beauty*, upon all the Divine Attributes. *1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.*

1. The end of God's setting forth Christ a Propitiation, *Rom. 3. 25, 26.* was to declare His Righteousness in the Remission of sins ; (which it does doubly,) 1. That without satisfaction,

Rom. 8. 34.

sin could not justly be remitted. 2. That satisfaction being given, it could not justly be imputed; *Who shall condemn? It is Christ that dyed.* But if those for whom this plenary satisfaction has been given, should not be justified and effectually saved, Divine Justice would be as liable to impeachment, as if He had saved them without: And so, the thing designed for the honour of His Righteousness, would turn to its disparagement.

Joh. 3. 19.

2. It would not accord with the love and goodness of God towards His Elect, that *That* which was meant for their Recovery, and was also a price well-worthy their Ransom; should possibly turn to their deeper condemnation: (for, so it must if they be not effectually saved:) This could not be that Pleasure of the Lord which should prosper in the hands of Christ.

Isa 49 6.
ch. 53. 10.
Irov 8 31.

3. It would not be according to the *Faithfulness* and *Truth* of God, that Christ should fail of That He was promised, and earnestly looked-for, as the fruit of His Sufferings; which was a *Seed to serve Him*: The thoughts of which were matter of complacency to Him from Everlasting. But if those He died for, should not only abide in the same condemnation He came to deliver them from; but under a much forer vengeance than if He had not undertaken for them; How grievous would it be to Him, and contradictious to the Faithfulness of God!

4. Another End of Redemption was, That the *manifest Wisdom* of God might shine-forth in the sight of Angels and Men. *Christ crucified is the Wisdom of God,* 1 Cor. 1. 24. But if it were so contrived, that the Thing chiefly design'd might possibly miscarry, it would be no illustration of Wisdom. Will one of common prudence part with His Jewels and choicest treasure, and that in such manner as never to be regain'd, and leave his purchase knowingly under hazard? Men (I judge) may possibly waste their Estates in Tryals and Essayes that come to nothing, but did they foresee the success, they would not so expose their prudence to reproach.

5. The *Greatness* and *Power* of God would suffer an eclipse,

clipse if it were in the power of Creatures to defeat His most wise and holy Designments, and hinder the accomplishment of His greatest work : What would the Egyptians say, but that He destroyed them, because not able to go through with what He undertook ? *Numb. 14. 16.*

6. Lastly, If the end of Christ's death might possibly be frustrate ; Then that blessed project for glorifying the Grace of God, might possibly be disannulled and come to nothing : For, None but *Saved Ones* do or can glorifie that Grace.

V. Another Argument for the *Sure effect* of Christ's death, is, because He hath the Management of the whole work committed to Himself ; as well the *Application* of Redemption, as the *procurement* of it : He is the Repository Root, and Treasury, wherein all the benefits of Redemption are laid up ; and the Great Almoner by whose hand they are dispensed. *Adam* was no more a publique Person after his fall : The new Stock was not intrusted with him, but put into the hands of Christ, who will give a better account of it : For

VI. There is Nothing wanting to Him (who is our Redeemer) which might any way conduce to the final Compleatment of His Work. There are Five things mainly requisite, to make a great undertaking Successful ; viz. Authority, Strength, Understanding, Courage, and Faithfulness : All which, the Captain of our Salvation is eminently invested with ; *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand.*

1. *Authority* ; He was appointed to His Office : (For, as Mediatour, the Father is Greater than He ;) *He came not of Himself, but the Father sent Him,* *Joh. 9. 42.* *He was called of God,* *Heb. 5. 4, 5.* It was laid on Him, and undertaken by Him, in the way of a *Covenant*, And Confirmed by an *Oath* ; Never to be Reversed ; which also may partly be the Meaning of God the Father's *Sealing Him,* *Joh. 6. 27.* *The Government is laid upon His Shoulder* ; He hath the *Key of David* committed to Him, *Rev. 3. 7.* Which shewes the absoluteness of His Authority : Without Him, No man can lift up his hand or his foot in all the Earth.

2. Strength

Joh. 3. 35.


Isa. 42. 6.
Heb. 7. 21.

Joh. 10. 18.
Ips. 61. 1.

Gen 41. 44.

2. *Strength or Power*; These cannot be wanting to Him, if *All in Heaven and Earth* be sufficient for it, *Matth.* 28. 18, And this he hath, *That He might give Eternal life* to as many as He dyed for, *Joh.* 17. 2. Which if they should miss of, it would be said, That all power was not able to Save them. He that made the World, is surely well able to Govern it, and to over-rule whatever comes into it: He would never have suffered sin (the *only* enemy) to invade it, if He could not have quell'd it at pleasure. *Their Redeemer is strong; The Lord of Hosts is His name; He shall [thoroughly] plead their cause:* He must reign until He shall have put all enemies both under His own feet and ours, *1 Cor.* 15. 25. *Rom.* 16. 20.

Isa. 63. 1.
Ch. 9. 6.

Jer. 50. 34.

3. *Understanding, or Knowledge*; This cannot be wanting to Him, who is the Wisdom of the Father; The Lord hath given Him *the tongue of the Learned*, that He might *speak words [in season] to him that is weary*, *Isa.* 50. 4. He knows His work *what* it is; *How* to effect it; and who they be that are concern'd in it.

(1) He knows what His work is; that it is, *To seek and to save that which was lost*; Not to bring Men into a *salvable* condition, (as some speak) but to *Save* them, *Mat.* 1. 21. His work was, *To open the blind eyes; To bore the deaf ears; To restore the withered Limbs; To cleanse the Lepers; To heal the Sick; To raise the Dead; To cast out Devils; To preach the Gospel, and to cause those it belongs unto, to hear and receive it:* He knows they are *Dead*, and He knows as well, that He is to *Quicken* them: and thence we have it in *Joh.* 5. 25, *The Dead shall hear and live:* And *Chap.* 10. 16, *Other Sheep I have; Them also must I bring; and they shall hear my voice.* He is also to keep them, and look to them, so as that one be not lost; and finally, *To raise them up at the last day, and to take them to Heaven with Him:* All which He is perfectly acquainted with, His work is before Him. *Isa.* 40. 10.

Joh. 17. 12. 22.
Chap. 39.

(2) As He knows His work, what it is; so the *best season and method* for its performance. He came in the fullness of time; when things were *ripe* for His coming: He came

came *Then* when there was most need of Him; the Devil's Kingdom at the highest, his Oracles in greatest credit, the World most oppressed by the Roman Power, and the true Religion near quite depraved among the Jews. It argues a *Dextrous* understanding, To take an enemy in his Ruff, at his highest pitch of strength and confidence, and throw him on his back: To succour a distressed Friend or Ally, when brought under foot, and set him on his high places; This the Scripture calls *A strengthening of the Spoiled against the Strong*: And thus doth our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is (partly) therefore said to be of *Quick understanding*. In all His Undertakings He deals prudently: And to This it is, that Hannah ascribeth success; *The Lord is a God of [knowledge] and His Purposes come to pass*, 1 Sam. 2. 3.

(3.) He knows *Who* they are for whom He is to do it. The fruits of his death are not as things to be given in common; They fall not *indifferently* upon Men, (as Rain upon all sorts of ground:) He knows Whom he came to Redeem; Not their *Number* only, but their *Names*; They were *all written in his book*: And so well is He vers'd in it, That He *calleth them all by their Names*: He does not omit any, nor call One for Another: He knows Whom the Father hath *Chosen and Given* to Him: He can neither forget them, Nor Mistake them: They are written in His breast, and on the palms of His hands, Isa. 49. 16.

(4.) To a Great undertaking is required *Courage*, or *Greatness of Spirit*; to confront opposition, and cut-through difficulties: And if this be wanting, all other Endowments will signify little, as to success. And how was our Lord and Redeemer qualified as to *this*! When He was entering into his passion, (against which He prayed, *If it were possible, that Cup might pass from Him*:) He then needed Courage in the Abstract; and we find That He had it answerably. In *Isaiah 50. 7*, the Prophet brings Him in as putting on His Armour of proof: *Therefore have I set my face as a Flint, and I know that I shall not be confounded*. In the greatness of this His strength, did He travel through all those Contradictions of Sinners, Temptations, Reproaches,

Joh. 18. 4.

Blasphemies, &c. And when His hour was come, He did not Recoil, nor hide Himself from them; No, nor stay till they came where he was; but goes to meet them. And though He might have had more than twelve Legions of Angels for asking; He waives their assistance, and in His own single person, Undertakes both this World and the Powers of darkness; yea, and the Wrath of His Father too; which was much more grievous, and of far Greater terrour, than all the Rest. And in all this, He was *Alone*; there was *None* with Him. And, that an Angel appear'd to Him from Heaven strengthening Him; It was rather a *Token* and *Part* of His *deep humiliation*, (That the Mighty God should seem to *want*, and so admit the profered service of His Creature) than a *lessening* of His sufferings. Now, all this was for the *Procurement* of Redemption; And can He then be wanting to the *Effectual application* of it? He cannot shrink at the sight of stragling parties, that hath Won the pitcht battel, and remains absolute Master of the Field: For this also, we have a sure word of Prophecy, in *Isa. 42. 4.* *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, until He have set Judgment in the Earth.*

Luke 22. 43.

Joh. 6. 38, 39.

Joh. 17. 12.

(5.) *Faithfulness*: This also is a grand and Necessary qualification for an high Undertaking: And for this our Redeemer is also signally Eminent. To do the Father's Will, was *That* He came for from Heaven: And this was His Will, *That of all He had given Him, He should lose nothing; but should Raise it up at the last day:* that is, *That He should give them Eternal life;* as it is in the 17 *John 2.* And we find Him professing, *That He had done it accordingly,* (v. 12.) and that *He will do it,* (v. 26.) according to His Promise so often repeated in the 39, 40, 44, 54. v. of *John 6.* And He keeps them, in *Faithfulness* to His trust; viz. *That the Scripture might be fulfilled.* Judas was let-go, to fall by his own transgression; Whom (doubtless) He could and would have kept, as He did the Rest; had he been (as they were) committed to His Charge: For, He gives to every one, according as He received for them; as is seen by comparing *Psal. 68. 18.* with *Ephes. 4. 8.* In the one place,

place, it is said, He received Gifts for Men; and in the other, (which is a quotation of the former) He gave Gifts to Men: Those therefore for whom He Received Eternal life, cannot fail of it, unless He should fail of His Trust; which indeed He cannot do, for He is Faithful in all His house, and That as a Son: and joynt-interest (you know) is a Natural and prevalent Obligation to Faithfulness. If any should offer to dispossess Him, He would answer as Naboth did Ahab; *God forbid that I should part with the Inheritance of my Father.* And His Faithfulness further appears, in that He makes it a Main part of His business now in Heaven, to have this work perfected; *He ever liveth to make Intercession for Those He died for,* Heb. 7. 25. There is great weight put upon this, in Rom. 8. 34, *Who is he that Condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is Risen again—Who also [maketh Intercession] for us.* And the sum of His Prayer is, (1) That Those given to Him, might be kept from evil, *John 17. 15.* (2) That they might be One in the Father and Himself, v. 21. And (3) That they may be Where He is, to behold His Glory, v. 24.

Heb. 3. 5, 6.

1 Kings 21. 3.

Now then, If the Salvation of Those He died for, was the End of His death: If it be the Father's Will, that they should be saved: If also this Salvation be the Thing for which He prays: And, *whatsoever He asketh of God, He will give it:* It needs must follow, *That the End of His death cannot be frustrate.*

John 11. 22.

Inferences.

I. This Doctrine, holding forth the Impossibility of Frustrating the end of Christ's death; is a Manifest proof and Argument for the Doctrine of Peculiar Redemption (before asserted:) For, If the Salvation of Those He died for, was the End of His dying; and the Intent of His death cannot be frustrate; Then He had not in His eye and design, the Salvation of them that are Not Saved.

Infer. 1.

II. It gives Believers high encouragement in their Contest against sin. For, if *our old Man was Crucified with Christ, That the body of sin might be destroyed in us;* and the

Infer. 2.

intent of His death cannot be frustrate; Then *sin shall not have Dominion over you*. Than which there is Nothing more strengthens your hands in fighting against sin; as is Argued in *Rom. 6. 6, 12, 14, and 22, verses.*

The truth is, *We* have nothing to do, (in comparison) but to take the prey: for the enemy is beaten to our hand. *2 Sam. 23. 10. Eleazar slew, and the people return'd after him only to Spoil:* So is it here: Our business now, is, to display our General's Trophies; To tell of His Victories, and prepare our selves for His triumph; That we may be *suitable* Attendants on Him at that Glorious and long'd-for Day.

There are Stragling parties (indeed) who watch for our halting; and seldom (else) can they have advantage against us: But their heart is broken; and if followed in our Captain's victorious Name, they'll still be Recoiling; Nothing daunts them *more* than to see you *stand to it*: Your Adversary would make you a Bridge of Gold, or any thing; (even to the half of his Kingdom) so you would found a Retreat; or *speak no more in that Name. Gird up therefore the loins of your Mind*; let an holy Magnanimity possess you; as knowing your Conflict shall end in your being Crown'd. You Run not for an *Uncertainty*; therefore fight not as they that beat the air: For, it is Nevertheless true, that your enemy is stubborn, and your constant pursuit will make him desperate: Since he may not have quarter, he'll do all he can, Not to die alone: He will stand on his Stumps when his legs are off; or lye on his back, and fight: (for his Malice is implacable) He will never give-over, till quite out of breath; (and yet he will not be *quite* without, whiles we have any; We must expire together) But here lies the odds; That We, dying in the Conflict, shall rise again with Marks of honour; and our Laurel hold green to Eternity: yea, we shall sit with our Glorious Captain in His Triumphal Chariot, *Rev. 3. 21.* but our enemy lies in eternal silence, and his Name shall Rot; or be Remembered only to Greaten our Glory: Only (as before,) be sure you stand to it; set your face as a flint; as your Lord and Master did; and know, That as he was not Confounded, so neither shall you:

you : All that he had, you have on your side, and the Merit of His improvement added to it : What Power the Father gave to Him, He delegates to you ; even a *power over all the power of the enemy* ; As it were an *Antidote or Superfedeas*, to invalidate all that comes against you. Wherefore then should we doubt ? Though they come about you like Bees, *In the Name of the Lord you shall destroy them*. Remember the advantages you have ; Besides the bruising of your enemy's head, and that incurably ; your own Head is in Heaven ; and He is there as on a Mount, to behold both yours and your enemies posture, and to send in relief ; which He never fails to do at a dead lift : And He makes intercession for you ; whiles you are fighting, His hands are up, and never weary : and therefore you may be confident of success. It was by virtue of His prayer, that *Peter's* faith did not fail, when there was but an hairs breadth between him and death : The Devil winnow'd, but Christ stood-by, and held the Wind in His fist : *The Lord will keep His people, because He hath Redeemed them.* *Pro. 30. 4. Jer. 31. 10, 11.*

III. Since the Lord hath so firmly Secured the blessedness of His Redeemed Ones ; Then let None who hope themselves of that happy Remnant, darken their evidences : Do Nothing, Omit Nothing, whereby your Interest in Redemption may be rendred doubtful to you ; lest you loose the Comfort and Strength which the Lord intends His People, by thus firmly insuring of it. *Infer. 3.*

IV. This also Confirms the Doctrines of Peculiar and Absolute Election ; Effectual Calling ; and Final Perseverance : As is very obvious to them that will seriously Mind it. Every of which, hath something of that kind, under those respective heads. *Infer. 4.*

And so I come to Effectual Calling, as the next great effect of peculiar Redemption.

OF Effectual Calling.

THe Doctrine of *Calling*, (which I term *Effectual* to distinguish it from that which is Outward only, and prevails not) respects the *Means whereby*, and the *Manner how*, God's Elect are actually prepared for that Salvation He hath chosen them to : It is God's revealing His Son in them ; and He doth it by the Holy Ghost ; whose office it is, to *Sanctifie* Whom the Father hath *Elected*, and Christ *Redeemed*. These three acts of Grace are peculiar to the Three Persons respectively ; as ye have it in *Jude*, v. 1.

Next to the Glory of His Grace, and the honour of His Son, the Lord hath placed the Blessedness of His People, as the principal End and Scope of all He hath done in the World, or will do, till He foldeth it up. It could not therefore stand with His holy wisdom, to leave those He was pleased to choose unto Salvation, to the conduct of their own Understanding and Will ; with such other helps as they have in common with other Men ; and thereon to hang the whole of His great design : For, by such a course, it would not only be *frustrable*, but *certainly defeated*. For prevention whereof, and that the purpose of His Grace might stand ; He hath made it of the very substance of Predestination, to *prepare and apply the Means, as well as to appoint the End* ; which, in the Sacred Language, is termed, a *Giving of all things pertaining to life and Godliness*.

2 Pet. I. 2.

The Sum of what I intend upon this Subject, is comprised in this Proposition ;

That what ever things are requisite to Salvation, are given of God freely, to all the Elect ; and wrought effectually by the Divine Power ; as the necessary Means of that Salvation, to which He hath appointed them.

By [Salvation] here, I understand, the Saints perfect settlement

tlement in Blessedness and Glory: And, by [things requisite thereto] all those Gifts, Graces, and Operations, that are any way necessary to their *actual* obtainment of that State.

The [Divine Power] is that Ability of working, which God hath reserved to Himself; and is not Moved or Governed by the Creature's act, but by the *Good pleasure of His Own Will*.

That divers things are Requisite to Salvation, needs no proof: My business therefore is, to shew

I. What these Requisites are.

II. Whence they come.

III. To whom they do belong, and by what Right?

IV. The Way and Manner of God's dispensing them.

I.

What these Requisites to Salvation are.

They are of three sorts; Some to be done *for* us; Some *upon* us, or *in* us; and others *by* us; yet so, as Not without the special assistance of that good Spirit who began the work, and who *worketh all in all*.

The Great thing to be done *for* us (next after Election) is *Redemption from sin*: This was a work of infinite moment, and as far above the Undertaking of Creatures; For,

1 The Justice of God, that must be satisfied, by a bearing the Curse due to Transgressors: By this, we are saved from wrath; and without This, Divine Justice will not open the house of His Prisoners.

2 All Righteousness must be fulfilled, by an absolute perfect Subjection to the Law: By *this* we are interested in Eternal life; and without it, there is no Entering into Rest.

3 The Devil (who had the power of death) must be destroyed, and his works of darkness (by which he leads captive at his will) dissolved; That life and immortality might be brought to light; and the prey delivered. None
of

Gal. 4. 4, 5.

Rom. 8. 3.

of which works could ever have been perform'd, but by One of the same Nature with the parties peccant or agresting; and yet equal in power and dignity with the Majesty offended: For which cause and end it was, That God sent forth his Son made of a woman, and made under the law, &c. That what the Law could not do, because of its weakness through the flesh, the Son of God in the likeness of sinfull flesh, might condemn sin in the flesh. (This was the proper subject of the former Head.) The end of which Redemption was To bring in the next sort of Things requisite to Salvation, viz. Such as are to be Done upon and in the Elect; namely, Their Reconcilement to God, and Receiving the Adoption of Sons. This is the actual performance of what was *intentionally* in Election, and *virtually* in the death of Christ; as the necessary way to their ultimate End.

The sum of these Requisites lies in Faith and Sanctification; the One imports their Right, the Other their capacity, Faith *intitles*, and Holiness *meeters*: Both which, though express'd as *two*, are alwayes together as if but *One*; and as inseparable as light from the sun: and without These, our little world would stil be in darkness, notwithstanding all the light that shines about us, or within us: Neither knowing our danger, nor how to escape it.

Rom. 4. 24.

1. *Faith*; This, in generall, is that *spiritual light* in which we see our selves by nature the children of wrath, and wholly unable to change our state; and withall, do apprehend God *Justifying freely by His Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*; and to that end, do Roll our selves upon him; and give up our selves to His Laws and Government. It is of the Essence of Faith to empty the Soul of *self*: and

1. Of its own *understanding*: It is a beam of Divine light, which evidenceth all a Man's natural knowledge to be ignorance and darkness as to Spiritual things: The Apostle speaks of it, as of a Faculty newly given: and the Nature of its new objects, requires it; For, *the natural man [cannot] discern the things of God*:

God : They that have the best eyes now, were sometimes Darkneſs.

2. Faith empties the Soul of its own Righteouſneſs.

1. By diſcovering the *uncleanneſs* of it, *Iſa.* 64. 5.

2. By ſhewing the neceſſity of a Better, *Rom.* 3. 20.

3. In *whom* this better is to be found, *Rom.* 10. 4.

4. That it may be attain'd and had ; *Rom.* 3. 25.

5. That being attain'd, the Soul is happy, and may triumph over all, *Rom.* 8. 34.

6. That this better Righteouſneſs and its own cannot ſtand together, *Gal.* 5. 2. *Rom.* 10. 3. And then

3. The next work of Faith is, To empty the Soul of its own *Strength* ; that is, of all confidence in himſelf, as to the *obtainment* of that better Righteouſneſs. He makes it (indeed) his buſineſs, to be ſhut of his own ; and moſt gladly would be Inveſted and clothed-upon with the Righteouſneſs of God ; but findes it a matter of transcendent difficulty : Now he's convinced, 'tis no eaſie matter to be ſaved ; ſince To believe, and to keep the whole Law, are things of an equal facility, *i. e.* They are (in truth) both alike impoſſible to him : He therefore takes hold of the Strength of God, to work this Faith in him ; And ſo, by a Faith unſeen, believes to a Faith that is viſible : It's Faith that is at work all this while, though the Soul knows it not till afterwards. *Iſa.* 27. 5.

II. *Sanctification* (or Inherent holineſs.) This conſiſts in the expulſion (or rather ſubduction and bringing under) of *Corrupt* nature, by bringing in the *Divine*, and ſetting it uppermoſt in the Soul : It is an Actual tranſlating of us out of Satan's Kingdom into His Own : It is, To have Chriſt formed in us : To bear the Image of the Heavenly : To have Diſpoſitions according to God ; and an heart after His Own. It is ſometimes called *Regeneration*, or a being born again : The *ſeparating* a Man from his *Old ſtock* ; and *grafting* him into the *New* ; Whereby the Law becomes written in the heart : It is alſo called, The *Paſſing away of old things*, and a *becoming New of all*. Not that the old faculties are deſtroyed or blotted out, in Regeneration ; but reduced

Col. 1. 13.

Jehn 3. 7.
Rom. 11. 17.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

Col. 3. 10.

duced, or Renewed, according to the Image of Him that Created it. As the Body, when it shall be Regenerated (or raised again) It shall be the same that was sown, but so changed in its qualities, as if it were another : So, in the Regeneration of the Soul ; the same Understanding, Will, Affections, Memory, remain ; but are quite otherwise disposed and qualified, according to the New Objects they are to converse with, 1 John 5. 20.

Dan. 10. 9. 19.

And being thus quickened by the Spirit of life from God, and set upon their feet ; they are capacitated for action, viz. in Things to be done by them : And now, say they (as Daniel, Now) let my Lord speak, for Thou hast strengthened me : And thence-forth, their work and business is, to Glorify that Grace that hath saved them ; To walk before God in the daily exercise of those Graces He hath given them ; To press after Perfection ; (that is) a Meekness for that State of Glory, which these things are preparatory to ; (which the Scripture calls, *A walking worthy of the Lord* ,) To shew forth his praises, the virtues of Him that hath called them ; Making His Law their Rule , and His Glory their End above all ; And all in way of dutiful Gratitude. For, though you may and ought to have respect to your own Salvation, peace and comfort ; yet so, as to substitute all to the Glory of God's Grace. And take this, by the way, (to encourage you in your duty) That the Glory of God and His people's blessedness, are so intertwined, as never to be divided : Whiles you keep *That* most directly in your eye and scope, your own Concerns are most currently going-on ; They fall-in together, and keep in the same Channel.

II.

Whence these Requisites to Salvation come ?

That Jesus Christ, that Great Fundamental Requisite, or One thing necessary, is the Gift of God, sent into the World by Him, and set forth a Propitiation through faith in His blood ; is above all need of proof. But the present enquiry is, touching the Author of Faith and holiness ; The Efficient

cient Cause of Regeneration ; *What Power it is, by which the New Creature is formed and brought forth ? Our Assertion is That the New Creature is God's workmanship entirely and alone.* This, the Scripture seems evident for : But, being a Truth unacceptable to Nature ; And there being some, who Owning the Name deny the Thing ; we must the more intently look to the proof of it : and our Argument for it is this ; That the New Creature must be wrought either by a Divine Power ; Or, by a Natural power ; Or, by the concurrence of both together : But,

I It cannot be wrought by a Natural power ; and that for these Reasons (among others.)

1. Because it is a *Creature* ; and of all Creatures the Noblest and most excellent. All the *Virtuosi* in the World are not able to make an Atom : They may refine and sublimare things that are : but cannot give the least being to that which is Not. How then should the Natural Man give Being to the New Creation ? To suppose such a thing, would be a degrading to the Divine Nature ; A setting the Image of the Heavenly below that of the Earthly : For, He that builds, is worthy of more honor, than the thing that is built by him. I. Heb. 3. 3.

2. Nothing can afford That it hath not in it self : Now, Every Soul in nature is Darkness, and posselt with an habitual aversion from God : And light is not brought out of darkness ; nor a clean thing out of an Unclean : No man will expect Grapes from thorns : the product will be according to That of which it is produced ; Every Seed will have its own body ; An evil Tree cannot bring forth good fruit : *That which is born of the Flesh is flesh*, and will never be better. Therefore the New Creature, being a Divine Thing, cannot be Educ'd of Natural Principles. II. Math. 7. 18. Job. 3. 6.

3. The Natural Man is not only void of all virtue and property that tends to Regeneration ; but is Opposite thereto : To be grafted into the true Olive-tree, is contrary to Nature : He is Enmity against God : and Enmity being a Principle incapable of Reconciliation, it cannot be supposed it will help to destroy it self. *They will not so much as* III. Rom. 11. 24.

Psal. 10. 4.
John 8. 44.

Jer. 44. 16
ch. 2. 25.
ch. 17. 9.

seek after God, nor take Him into their thoughts. Satan they follow with natural Motion, but as for the word of the Lord, they profess stoutly, They will not hearken unto it: They have lived Strangers, and after them they will go: So desperately wicked are the hearts of Men: They are even made up of fleshly lusts, which war against the Soul, And whatsoever hath respect to its happy Restoremēt. And this Enmity is maintained and animated;

1 Cor. 2. 14.

John 3. 9.
ch. 6. 52.

(1) By the *Darkness* that is in them, which all men in Nature are filled with; or with *false lights*, which are equally Pernicious and obstructive to this Work: By reason hereof, the most glorious objects, though just afore them, are hid from their eyes; They do not, nor they cannot discern the *Things which are of God*: They have false Conceptions of every thing, *Call Good evil, and evil Good; put light for darkness, and darkness for light*; and the most excellent things are commonly furthest off from their approbation. It's a known Experiment, That the more *Spiritual* any Truth is, the more will *carnal* Reason object against it; *How can these things be?* and *How can this Man give us of His flesh to eat?* By all the understanding that Men have afore Conversion, they are but more strongly prejudiced against the Truth: *Acts* 17. 18. *1 Cor.* 1. 19—23.

Rom 3. 9—18.

Gen. 6. 13.

Jer. 10. 14.
Psal. 51. 3.
58. 5.

Rom. 8. 7.

(2) This Enmity is further Confirm'd and Fix'd, by the *Naturality* of it. If it were an *Adventitious* quality, it might possibly be separated: But Now it cannot by any humane power. And that it is *Natural* appears, in that the *Universality* of Mankind is infected with it: It is not Here and There One; But *All and Every one*: *Jews and Gentiles, are all under sin: None that understandeth; None that seeketh after God; None that doth good, no not One: Every imagination of their heart is only Evil, and that continually; Every Man is brutish, and altogether filthy*: and this in their Root; *Conceiv'd in sin; Go astray from the womb, &c.* It also grows up with them, and the longer it lives the worse it is, and the more *Impregnable*: *It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*

And

And though, at times, they look another way (like Bullets of Stone or Lead, which acted by a foreign power, are mounted into the Air) their *upward Motion quickly ceaseth*, because it was not *Natural*; They come again to their Center of their own accord, and there they will live and die : As was verified in *Saul, Abab, Agrippa*, and others.

4. The New Creature cannot be the Product of *Natural* Power, because every thing is Receiv'd and Improv'd according to the Nature of that which receives it. Plants and other Creatures, turn all their Nourishment into their own Species and Property : A Vine and a Thistle both planted in one Soil, have the same Sun, Dew, Air, and other Influences common to both; yet, each one Converts the whole of that it receives into its own Substance and kind. You may Plant and Prune and dig and Dang an evil Tree, bestow what cost and pains you will upon it; it does all but enable the more pregnant Production of evil fruit : Just so doth the *Natural Man*, even turn the Grace of God into lasciviousness : Jude ver. 4. As to the Pure all things are pure; so to the Impure all things are defiled. David by his afflictions learned to keep God's Law; but Ahaz trespassed yet more : Good Josiah his heart melts at the reading of the Law, he humbles himself and sets to Reforming; but wicked Jehoiakim, he cuts the Roll in pieces and burns it : Thus Sin, (i. e. Corrupt Nature) works death by that which is Good.

IV.

I I. The New Creature is not wrought by the Concurrency of Divine and Natural Power [together:] For,

1. The Holy Ghost needs no assistance in His work : Who and Where is he that stood up for his help, when He moved on the Waters, and brought forth this World into form? Job. 38 4. When He weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the hills in a balance? He that made all things of Nothing, cannot be supposed to need the aid of any. As Man had nothing to do in the Conception of Christ's humane Nature, but the Power of the Most High was alone in that work; so also it is

I.

Isa 40 12--15.

in forming Christ within us. Why should He call in the aid of another, unless deficient of Himself? And He must greatly be strengthened that takes in the help of an Enemy.

II.

2. If the Holy Ghost had need of Help, the flesh affords Him not the least: For,

Rom. 5. 6.

1 Pet. 1. 24.
Job. 26. 2.

(1) The Natural Man is *without strength*: The best-Natur'd Man in the World, until Regenerate, is but *Flesh*; And *all flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower of grass*; which fades in a Moment: It is *an Arm that hath no strength*. And it is not onely so in it self, but it renders weak and impotent what ever Relyes upon it, or may be used by it, for any spiritual End. A Straw in the hand of a Giant, will make no deeper impression, than if in the hand of a Strippling: The Law it self, *which was ordained to life, is made weak through the flesh*.

Rom. 8. 3.

Exod. 5. 2.

(2) The Flesh is an *opposite* principle; at perfect enmity against the Holy Seed; (as you see afore:) It answers as Pharaoh, *Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?* It's whole business is to crush the workings of the Spirit; and the Conflict ceaseth not, but in the total Overthrow of the one party. The *Flesh* and the *Spirit* alwaies have been, are, and will be *Two*: Yea, even where the Enmity hath lost its *dominion*, it will maintain a *Conflict* to the last; And if the one fights against the other, *after* the New Creature is formed; it will doubtless oppose the *first* formation of it.

2 Cor. 5. 16.
Deut. 22. 10:
Deut. 22. 9.

(3) If we should suppose the flesh able, in any respect, to give assistance in this work; the Holy Ghost would none of it. *What Concord hath God with Belial?* such Mixtures are *Abomination* to Him: He would not permit His people to *yoke an Ox and an Ass together in ploughing*; Nor to *sow their Land with divers seeds*: And it in building an Altar, *their Tool* were lift up upon it, the Lord reckons it defiled. Exod. 20. 25.

(4) Suppose a possibility of Conjunction, What would be the issue of it? *When the Sons of God went in to the daughters of men, Giants were born to them*, Gen. 6. 4. If Creatures of several kindes should couple together, what can be

be produc'd, but a Monster in Nature? such Monsters (in Spirituall) are hypocrites, and temporary believers; In whom there is something begotten on the will of Man, by the Common strivings and enlightenings of the Spirit; which attains to a kind of formality; but proves (in the end) a lump of dead flesh; - it never comes to be a New Creature; as you see in *Herod* and *Agrippa*. An Owl's egg, though hatcht by a Dove or Eagle, will prove but a Night-bird; The Seed of the bond-woman will be Carnal, though *Abraham* himself be the father of it.

A little further to illustrate this Truth; let us briefly review, What things in the world, that are Common to Men, can be supposed to influence their hearts so as to bring them to God; They may all be Reduced to five; A prosperous Condition, Afflictions, The Word of God, The strivings of the Spirit, and Miracles.

1. *Prosperity*: This, we find, hath not done it: How many have been the worse, and how few (if any) the better for it? *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*: In the time of the Judges, when ever they had respite from trouble they presently fell to idleness: when *Uzziah* was strong, *his heart was lifted up to his destruction*. The Papacy, at this day, and for Centuries past; who in such splendour did prosperity, and who so wicked! *They are not in trouble like other Men; their eyes stand out with fatness, &c.* But are they bettered by it? No, *Pride compasseth them about like a chain, and they set their Mouths against the Heavens*. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn Righteousness. Dent 32. 15.
2 Chr. 26. 16.

2. *Afflictions and Judgments* will not do it. It appears by *Amos*, Ch. 4. ver. 6 - 11. That that people were loaded with variety of judgments; yet they turned not to Him that smote them; *The more they were stricken, the more they revolted*. The Lord was wroth with Ephraim, and smote him; *He hid His face from Him, and was wroth*: (which, if any thing, should have Moved him :) But what cares Ephraim? *He went on forwardly in the way of his Heart*. The Jews continue to this day, in their unbelief; though wrath be come

Rev. 16. 9, 11
Hos. 7. 9.
Pro. 27. 22.

come upon them to the uttermost. The Antichristian world, when vials of wrath were powred forth upon them; they blasphemed God, and Repented not : Bray a fool in a Mortar, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

Rom. 3. 2.
Deut. 4. 7.

3. The Word of God, and his Ordinances ; Neither is it in these, to turn the heart back again. Of this, the people of Israel are a pregnant example : To them were Committed the Oracles of God ; No Nation had God so nigh them, as they ; and yet the most stubborn stiff-necked people, that ever the earth bore. *The Lord sends them His prophets,*

2 Chr. 36. 15, 16

Jer. 25. 3, 4.

Jer. 37. 15.

Lu. 20. 10--15

rising early and sending : And see how they'r used ! First, they sleight His Messengers, and send them away empty : Then they fall to beating and imprisoning of them: yea, they proceed further (for this enmity knows no bounds) Some they Stoned ; Others they slew with the Sword : When was there One that escaped them ? At last, He sends them His Son ; Surely, they'l Reverence Him ! No, This is the heir ; Come, let us kill Him : And thus they went-on Till there was no remedy.

Gen. 6. 3.

4. The World of Ungodly in Noah's time ; After warning of the flood, they had the Spirit of God striving with them Sixscore years together : And yet, Not a Man in the whole Universe prevailed-upon. The people in the Wilderness ; How many wayes did the Lord strive with them, by mighty deliverances, terrible Appearances, Merciful Providences, Dreadfull Judgments ; And this, Fourty years together ! and yet, still they went-on Rebelling against Him, and vexing his holy Spirit.

Isa. 63. 10.

Exod. 7. 14, 22.

Ch. 8. 19.

Ch. 9. 7, &c.

Num. 16. 32.

ver. 35.

5. Miracles will not do it : What a Multitude of These, mingled with Judgment, where shewn upon Pharaoh ! All which did but further harden him. Then the People in the Wilderness ; Take but that one Instance of Korah and his Company ; *The Earth clave asunder, and swallowed-up the chief of the Mutineers, with all that they had ; They went alive into the Pit : Two hundred and fifty more were consumed by fire from Heaven : Which one would think should cause them to fear the Lord, and do no more presumptuously ; and yet, the next thing we hear of them, on the very Morrow, they are at it again ; And that*

ver. 41

that, not a Party of them, but the whole Congregation.

v. 41.

All which considered, and laid together; It follows with much evidence,

III. That the New Creature is the Product of Divine Power alone.

The Evangelist John is clear on our side, touching this Original and Pedigree of it; Both Whence it is not, and whence it is: *It is born* (1) *not of blood*; It belongs not to, *Joh. 1. 12.* nor is brought forth in, any as they are Men, made of flesh and blood; Nor as they are *Abraham's seed according to the flesh*: Nor (2) *is it born of the will of the flesh*, The carnal and sensual affections have nothing to do in the spiritual birth: Nor (3) *of the will of Man*: The rational faculties, by which Men are set above the Rank of other Creatures; *these do not contribute towards our Divine Sonship: But* (4) *It is of God*: i. e. It is His Work alone; and the Natural Man has nothing to do in that birth: he is perfectly un-*active* in it, even as the Dry bones in causing themselves to Live: Or as *Lazarus* in Reviving himself; of whom it is said, *He that was dead came forth bound hand and foot*: *Ezek. 37. 5, 9, 14.* Which was such a Demonstration of Divine Power, that the Pharisees themselves acknowledge, *If they now let Him alone, all men will believe in Him.* (And if it were not so, the Lord alone should not be exalted) And with this falls in that other beloved Disciple James, *Of His own will be- gate He us*: i. e. By His Own Divine Power, He forms and brings forth the New Creation, without any assistance from the Old, or Co-operation of it. Peter, he also tells us, *It is born of Incorruptible Seed*: And John, again, *That It is born of the Spirit*: which is, plainly, to be of the Off-spring of God. Of like tenour is that of the Prophet, *Thou hast wrought all our works in us*: and that of Paul, *We are his workmanship*; As also That of the Psalmist, *It is He that hath made us (and not we our selves) His people*. We find it here, and in John, expressed both Negatively and Positively; as *purposely* and for ever to exclude what-ever is in Man, from being so much as thought contributory to the

Ro. 9. 7.

Ezek. 37. 5, 9, 14.

Joh. 11. 44.

v. 43.

James 1. 18.

2 Pet. 1. 3.

1 Pet. 1. 23.

Joh. 3. 8.

Isa. 26. 12.

1 Ph. 2. 10.

Ps. 100. 2.

New Creation; and that the whole Work might be Father'd upon God *only*: Which is indeed, the natural Result of all those Scriptures which speak of this Work under the Notion of a *Creature*; which necessarily implies, That the *whole* of It, both *Matter* and *Form*, is from the Creatour: (For, in truth, a *Creature's* foundation is *Nothing*, besides *the good pleasure of God*.) It may further be Noted, That in *James*, The Father of Lights is said to beget it; and in the *Galatians*, *Jerusalem which is above*, is said to be the Mother of it: and in *John* (as afore) that It is born of the Spirit: And, if Father and Mother; Begetter and Bringer-forth, are both in Heaven; what shall the Man of Earth found his pretensions upon, as to the Parentage of the New Creature?

And further, It is worthy of Remark,

1. What sort of *Instruments* were mostly used in this Work; Not the *Learned*, but *Illiterate Men*: And of These, *such* most eminently, as had neither elegance of Speech, Nor Majestick presence: And the End of this was, That it might appear, and Men might be Convinced, That
 2 Cor. 10. 10. their Faith stood not in (was neither made nor maintain'd by) the wisdom of Men, but the Power of God.
 1 Cor. 2. 3, 4, 5.

2. The *natural unaptness* of the Persons (commonly) wrought upon, to Receive those high-born Principles: Not many of the *Wise and Noble*; but the *poor, base, and foolish*; (i. e. In comparison of Others) And why These? Truly, it was to make good the Truth that's here asserted, viz. That
 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. no flesh might Glory in His presence. And yet likewise take Notice, That the *Wise and Noble* were not excluded; Witness the wife of *Herod's Steward*, *Joseph, Nicodemus*, and *Sergius Paulus*, a Prudent Man: Which further illustrates the Power of God, in that He did, by those weak and contemptible Means, bring-in also such as These.

3. The Scripture's so *emphatically* ascribing the Work unto God: which kind of ascription, were very improper, if *Faith and Holiness* were things so Common, and easily attain'd; and the *Natural Man* so *Able and Virtuous* an Engine in that Work, as most Men imagine. *Paul* files it, The Faith of the Operation of God: *Isaiah* makes it dependent
 Gal. 2. 12.

dant on the Arm of the Lord [Revealed] (i. e. Made-bare, *Isa. 53. 1.* and put-forth to the utmost :) Our Saviour, He attributes it to God the Father, as [Lord of Heaven and Earth :] And Paul, agen, To the exceeding Greatness of His Mighty Power, even the same by which He raised Jesus Christ from the Dead ; Even Then, when the sins of all His People lay upon Him ; And all the Malice, Strength, and Subtilty, of the Powers of Darknes, were up in Arms against it : Which was, indeed, the highest Indication of Divine Power, that ever was put-forth, or shall be.

III.

Our next Enquiry is, *Who those blessed Ones are to whom these Requisites to Salvation do belong ? and by what Title ?*

The Answer is, *They all do belong to Elect Persons, and That in right of their Election.*

To put Effects in the place of Causes ; and Causes, of Effects ; is a great absurdity in Natural things : and yet, how prone are we to it, in Matters of Divine Concernment ! which chiefly comes from the pride of our Spirits ; who fain would be Some-body in procuring our own happiness ; and do therefore ascribe it to any Cause, rather than *That* which is proper to it. This is a Great Evil ; and the more perilous and catching, because espoused by Some of no-common-profession ; and That with great pretences of Reason for it. To Refute which, your most rational course will be To search and consult the Scriptures ; whose testimony and right Reason, do always sort-together : And if by *this Ascent* you follow Salvation, and all the Conduancements thereto, up to their Head ; you shall find them all to be intirely and absolutely of God, and contained in the same Decree : And consequently, That Faith and Holiness are the Effect and certain Consequent of Election.

The genuine Import of Scripture-Salvation, is broad and comprehensive ; extending to all manner of Requisites, which any way conduce to the perfect accomplishment of

the thing it self: Outward Salvation, what ever belongs to the Outward Man's preservation; As Water, Bread, Walls, Bulwarks, &c. isa. 26.1. *Salvation will appoint Walls and Bulwarks*: i. e. The promise of Salvation, implies and carries in it, all things pertaining to Safety: So, Spiritual Salvation, what ever pertains to Blessedness and Glory; as *Redemption, Faith, Holiness, and Holding-out to the End*: Any of which being absent, would invalidate all the rest; As one Round of a Ladder pluck'd-out, hinders your ascent to the Top. If One gives me a piece of Land that is round-inclosed; the Law gives me a Way to it (though no express mention thereof in my Deed) so as to take the profits: Otherwise, little would his Gift signify to Me! *Salvation is That* the Elect are endowed with; Faith and Holiness, the necessary Way to their actual possession: And therefore, *These* they must be ordained unto (and are) as well as to Salvation it self: For, being *Predestinate to the Adoption of Sons*, and to be conformed to the Image of Christ; (which is not perfectly accomplished till His appearing in Glory) they must be *Predestinate* also to all those intermediate Dispensations and Graces, which are requisite thereto: For, Right to the *End*, gives Right to the *Means*: They are therefore said to be *Chosen to Salvation* [through] *Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth*. In order of Intention, God wills the End first, and then the Means; In order of Execution, the Means first, as directive to That End: The *End* is the cause of the Means, and *Election* the Cause of them both.

Rom. 8.28.

Eph. 1.5.

1 Joh. 3.2.

2 Thes. 2.13.

Ro. 8.30.

Eph. 2. 4, 8, 10:

The Promise of *Canaan* to *Abraham's Seed*, did virtually contain what ever must come between the making of the Promise, and the final performance of it; As (1) To multiply his Seed into a Nation. (2) To keep *Espan, Laban*, and Others, from hurting them. (3) To provide for them in time of famine. (4) To preserve and increase them in *Egypt*, notwithstanding the *Egyptians* craft and cruelty to suppress them. (5) To bring them forth with an high hand, in contempt of *Pharaoh's* Resolvedness against it, and his Potency to withstand it. (6) To divide the Sea before

before them, and provide them a Table in the Wilderness.
 (7) To cause their Enemies hearts to faint, and become as Water. (8) To send the Hornet before them, and to fight for them, &c. (For Otherwise, the Lord's giving them Canaan, had been but as the Pope's giving England to the Spaniard, that is, If he could get it :) And lastly, To pardon their manifold great and high provocations; by which they exposed themselves to wrath and extirpation daily : So is it in the Case of Election ; It draws with it even All that is tendent to the Saints actual Investiture with Glory. The Apostle therefore linketh Eternity past with Eternity to come : He makes Election and Glorification the two extreame points of the Compass ; Calling and Justification (which are parts intermediate) he founds upon the First, in order to the Last ; and gives you their Set-course, in Rom. 8. 38. Whom He did Foreknow, Them also He did Predestinate : (To what ?) to be conformed to the Image of His Son ; And whom He did Predestinate, them also He Called ; (And what did He Call them to ? He Called them to Holiness, to Glory and Virtue :) And whom He Called, them also He Justified 2 Pet. 1. 3. and Glorified : These All do belong to One and the same persons, and that by virtue of the Decree; and no one of them did ever go alone.

The like Succession of Causes and Effects ye have in the 16th of Ezekiel ; The Lord finds them in their blood, that is, in their natural condition : He enters into Covenant with them, and makes them His Own; (there's Election:) Then He Washes them, and that thoroughly ; (there's their Justification :) And then Adorns them, (there's their Sanctification ;) which always is Consummated in Glory. Ezek. 16. 6--12.

In the 17th of the Acts, ye have Paul preaching at Thessalonica : The same Doctrine was propounded to all indefinitely ; (and it must be so, for the Minister knows not the Elect from other Men) But the Holy Ghost, who searcheth the deep things of God, and hath the Management of this Work committed to him, He knew the Elect by Name, and accordingly took them ; Gather'd them One by One, (each One in his proper time) and open'd their Ear to discipline ; Joh. 10. 3. Isa. 17. 12. Acts 17. 1-5.

pline; Making them *That* they were Chosen unto. And the same Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, where he Celebrates the effects of this Sermon, brings in their Election as the Cause of their Conversion; *Knowing, Brethren beloved, your Election of God, [For] our Gospel came not to you in Word only, (as it did to others) but in power: So in the Acts, As many as were. Ordained to Eternal life, believed: And the Lord added to the Church daily, (whom did He add?) such as should be Saved. Effectual Calling is a sure Demonstration of Election, and the first Effect by which it can be known.*

1 *Thes.* 1. 4, 5.

Acts 13. 48.
ch. 2. 47.

2 *Pet.* 1. 7.

Tit 1. 1.

Isa. 53. 10.

Tit. 1. 2. with

2 *Tim.* 1. 9.

Eph. 1. 9.

1 *Cor.* 1. 18.

That precious Faith through which we are Saved, is obtained through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 *Pet.* 1. 7. (1) It is given through the Righteousness of God the Father; and so, it either respects His Ordaining us to Eternal life; In which Act He did implicitly engage Himself to give us Faith, (which may therefore be called *The Faith of God's Elect* :) Or else, it respects His promise made to Christ, That setting His Soul an Offering for sin, He should see His seed: Or it may be intended of both. (2) The Righteousness of Christ is concerned in it two ways; (1) As the Meriting or procuring Cause thereof; and so, this Faith belongs, of Right, to every one He died for, according to *Phil.* 1. 29. Or (2) As He is that faithful Servant, who gives to every One according as He hath received of the Father for them. In all which respects, it evidently flows from Election. To confirm which, he says expressly in his former Epistle, That they were *Elected unto Obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ* : 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. So, in the 1 to the *Ephes.* The Mystery of His Will is said to be Made known to them, According to His good pleasure which He had purposed in Himself. The same Intendment we have in the *Corinthians*; The preaching of the Gospel is to them that perish, foolishness; but to Us who are [Saved], it is the Power of God: And in *Timothy*, Who hath [Saved] us, and Called us with an Holy Calling: In both places, *Saving* is put afore *Calling*; and then it must be afore Faith: And how Men are Saved before they Believe,

Believe, unless by Election, (or Redemption, which is commensurate with Election) doth not appear to us. To this purpose 'tis further Observable, that in Rom. 8. the Apostle sets Predestination afore Calling, as in Timothy, and the Corinthians, he doth Saving; And in Rom. 9. He puts Calling in a tense subsequent to Election or Preparing unto Glory.

Ro. 9. 23, 24.

The Apostle Jude, his sentence also accords with it; He directs his Epistle To them that are Sanctified by God the Father, And Preserved in Jesus Christ, and Called: Where, by [Sanctified] he means [Elected] separated or set apart: In this tense the word is used elsewhere, where it will not admit of any other: Exod. 31. 13, I am the Lord that doth Sanctifie you: And more plainly in Numb. 8. 17, All the First-born of the Children of Israel are Mine: On the day that I smote every First-born in the Land of Egypt, I [Sanctified] them for my self: Here no other thing but Choosing, Selecting, or Setting apart, can be intended: And I see no Reason, why it should not be so understood in that of Jude.

Jude 1.

And it is termed an Holy Calling, Not only as it Calleth us to Holiness; but, as it is Sacred, Peculiar, Set apart, and appropriated to an Holy People, viz. Those whom the Lord hath set apart for Himself: Whose Eternal Sanctifying them in His Decree, was the Original Cause of their being Sanctified Actually; He loved them with an Everlasting love, and [therefore] with loving kindness doth He draw them: And this their Actual Sanctification is so indubitable a Consequence of the Decretive, and so Appropriate to the same persons; that the same word is used for both, as it is also for Redemption; For their sakes (says Christ) I Sanctify my Self, Job. 17. 19. A lightsom Instance of this, we have in Numb. 11. 26. Eldad and Medad, (though they came not up to the Tabernacle with their Brethren; yet) being of them that were [Written] the Spirit came-upon them, and they Prophesied in the Camp: Election finds out Men when they think not of it. So, the Lord first Determines Jeremy to his Office; Then puts-forth His hand and fits him for his Work: Even Christ Himself was first appointed to His Mediatory Office; And then the Spirit came upon Him, because so appointed.

Jer. 31. 3.

Jer. 1. 9.

Isa. 61. 1.

Quer.

Quer. In the 1 John 16. it is said, That to them which Received Him, He gave power to become the Sons of God: which seems to put their believing before their Sonship.

Sol. Albeit, that Faith goes afore the *Manifestation* of our Sonship, yet not afore our *Sonship it self*: *The Adoption of Sons is That we were Predestinated-to, before the foundation of the World*, Eph. 1. 4 and 5. That (therefore) in *John*, must be understood with that of *Moses*, when he pleads with God for His presence with His People; *So shall we be separated from all the People that are on the face of the Earth*: Not, that this Separation was *Now* to be made; It was done afore, *Levit. 20. 24.* But, his meaning is, That by the Lord's going with them, this their Separation should be *Manifested*. The same sense of the word, ye have in *Matthew 5, Love your Enemies, Bless them that Curse you; That ye may be* (that is, that ye may appear to be) *the Children of your Father which is in Heaven*: In like Manner We become the *Sons of God by Faith*: *Gall. 3. 26.*

The budding of *Aaron's Rod*, was not the *Cause* of God's Choosing him to the Priesthood; Nor the falling of *Abi 1. 24, 26.* the Lot upon *Saul*, and afterwards upon *Matthias*, the Reason *Why* God designed them the One to the Kingdom, and the other to the Apostleship; They were both appointed before, and those *Events* were but the *Effects* of that their *fore-appointment*, and *Evidences* of it. So, the Giving of the Spirit is that which follows Election; *Because Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.* Although the *Manifestation* of our Adoption, and our actual enjoyment of its privileges, are in time; yet, the Thing it self is from *Everlasting*.

Pursuant to this, our Saviour manifests the Father's name to the Men He had given Him out of the World; And These receive it: *The Sheep hear his voice, and follow Him*: Of others he saith expressly, *Ye believe not, because ye are not of my Sheep*: He that is of God, heareth God's word; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. The same Reason

He

He gives for His *different* Ministration towards *His own*, Mat. 13. 11. and *Others*; To the *One* it was [*given*] to know the *Mysteries of the kingdom of God*; To the *other*, it was [*not*] given: And therefore, having ended His parables, He dismisses the *Multitude*, as having noe more for them; but to His *Disciples* He expoundeth every thing in private: and ye see, He puts it upon *Election*, as that which had invested them with this prerogative above the *Rest*, [*To you it is given*] i. e. It belong'd to them by God's Donation and appointment: They are *first* Saints by Election, *Then* Saints by Calling.

When Christ appeared to *Paul* going to *Damascus*, they that were with Him, were all in a Maze; A voyce they heard, but knew not what it spake: Why so, since they were as likely to yeild as he? Truly, it was not intended for them; and therefore, their Ears were not boared, Nor the speech directed to them, but to *Paul*; and to *Paul* by *Name*: But why to *Paul* above the *Rest*, since he was the Ringleader and Chief Persecutor in the Company? *Paul* was a *Chosen Vessel*; And this, in brief, was the Reason of it, as you have it recorded in *Acts* 22. 14, *The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee*, [*That thou shouldest know His will.*]

The Jews had many Means of knowing the *Messiah*, and Inducements to believe in him, which the Gentiles had not; And yet, *These* embrace the Gospel, whiles the *Jews* Reject it: Those who *sought after Righteousness*, fell short of it; when Those who *sought it not*, attain'd it: For the bottom-Reason of which different Dispensation We are referr'd to *Election*, *Rom.* 11. 7, *The Election hath obtained, and the Rest were blinded.* Rom. 10. 20.

How variously are several Men affected in hearing the same word! The *Sheep* and the *Rest*, have both the same Outward means: One Neglects it; (attends not at all, or Regards not what he hears :) A second quarrels it; (as the *Jews* often did :) A Third is perswaded almost; (as *Agrippa* was, and those that would hear *Paul* agen of that Matter :) A Fourth is *Pricked in the heart*, and called effectually:

Acts 2.39.

Rom. 8.28.

Pl. 65.4.

2 Tim. 1.9.

Acts 13.48.

Rom. 11.7.

It's a *stumbling-block* to some, *Foolishness* to Others, And to *some* 'tis the *Power of God*; And *these* [*some*] are such as were *Elected*; of Those to whom the *Promise* was made; and are therefore termed *The Called according to His Purpose*, Rom. 8. And agen, in 2 Tim. 1. 9, They are said to be *Called according to His own Purpose and Grace which was given them in Christ before the World began*: They are first *Chosen*, and then *Caused* to approach unto God.

There is almost no end of Scriptures to this purpose: I shall instance one more, & so close up this Particular. All the blessings which the Saints are blessed with *in time*; are all bestowed according to God's Decree of Election, *before time*; as is manifest from Eph. 1. ver. 3, 4, 5. Where I observe, 1. That Election goes *afore* the Actual Donation of Spiritual blessings; For, *These* are given *in time*; *That* was *afore time*; And That which comes *After*, cannot be the Cause of That which went *Afore* it: One Effect may be the Cause of another; but not the Cause of That which caused it self. 2. That the *Actual Donation* of Spiritual blessings, is [*according*] to *Election*: i. e. *Election* is the *Rule* by which the Dispensation is guided: It is *Adequate* with Election, and *Answerable* thereto, even as the Impression is to the Printing-Types; Or, as the fashion of *Dauids* body, to the platform thereof in God's book; and the Tabernacle to the pattern shewn in the Mount; According to which, all things were made, as well in respect of Number Weight and Measure, as Form and Figure. Spiritual blessings are not given to One *More* or *Fewer*, or in other manner, but just as Election hath laid it forth: Which also is further confirm'd by Rev. 21. 27, Where we finde, That None are admitted into the Holy City, but *whose Names were written in the book of life*; And *Who-so-ever was not found written in that book, was cast into the lake of fire*, chap. 20. 15. Which shews, That at the latter day, it will be taken for granted, That *as many as were ordained to Eternal life, believed*; And that all and every One *without* the list of Election, dyed in Unbelief; That *the Election obtained*, and *the Rest were blinded*. Therefore,
Faith

Faith and Holiness are not the Cause, but the Certain effect and inseparable Consequent of Election.

IV.

Our last Enquiry is, *Of the Way and Manner of God's Dispensing spiritual Blessings?* And that is, *Effectually and Freely.*

I. *Effectually.*

The Soul is not turned to God by a Twyne-Thread; Nor doth the Lord content Himself, with *Wishing* and *Woulding* that it might be so, after the manner of Men; who either are *Indifferent* in the thing, Or have not Where-with to Effect their desires: Nor merely by propounding, Moving and striving, by Moral Suasions, Instructions, Threatnings, and the like; (which are of little avail with a dark Understanding and fixed enmity, which every Natural Man is acted by :) But, by the putting-forth of a *Power Invincible*; A Power that will not be said *Nay*; but what it *Wills*, That it *will doe*; What it undertakes, it goes thorow with. To doe a thing *Effectually*, is to doe it *Perfectly, Thorowly, Succesfully*; that is, So to use and apply the Means, that the End designed is surely brought-to-paſs; And this, Notwithstanding all the Weakness, Aversness, and Repugnancy of the Carnal Mind against it.

I might produce Instances not-a-few, touching God's *Effectual Working* to bring-about things of lesser Moment: How unwilling was *Moses* to be His Messenger to *Pharaoh*? So opposite to it, That when he had no farther plea nor excuse to make, he carries it *Perversly* towards the Lord; (*send by the hand of him whom thou shouldest send:*) But having designed him for the Work, He leaves him not, until He had won him to it. So, *Pharaoh* resolv'd he would not let the people goe; But, *I will stretch out my hand*, (saies God) *and he shall let you goe*; Much more will He make His Arm bare, for the salvation of His Chosen.

Exod. 3 & 4.

chap. 4. v. 13.

ver. 18.

ver. 20.

And it must be so done,

Z 2

1. Because

Mark 5.4.

Math. 28.18.

Ezek. 36.27,
28.

I. Because otherwise, the *Elect* should be in no better condition than *Other men* ; For, until conversion, Satan hath as fast hold of *them* as of the *Rest*. Adam's fall was the Devil's Master-peece ; To bring men into his own condemnation, is the Trophee he glories in ; and being a Prince both proud, subtle, and imperious, you may not think he will be *Buffed*, or *Complimented* out of his hold : Intreaties, Menaces, and force of Arguments, are of no weight with him ; He laughs at your strong Reasons, and Counts them but rotten wood ; *Jesus* I know, and *His Spirit* I know ; but what are these ! No, this kind goes not forth by consent ; Nothing will move him, but *that Power* which Heaven and Earth do bow under : He that made him, (and he onely) can cause his sword to approach unto him, and take the Prey from this *Terrible One* : And for this it was, that our Saviour tells the Apostles, (when he sends them to *turn Men from Satan unto God*) That *all power in Heaven and Earth was committed to him* : And that, in this power *He will be with them to the end of the World* Which was (indeed) but Needfull ; For, they had surely gon on a sleeveless errand, (a weak and fruitless design,) if Christ himself *thus impower'd* had not gone with them.

And for the *Elect* themselves, They are (of themselves) no better disposed to this work, than those that *Never* shall be wrought-upon : They are *Enemies in their minds, Dark-nest, Dead in sins, and Children of wrath, even as Others* : And *this* they are by *Nature* : Their State, therefore, could never be changed, if a Power *Invincible* and *Invincibly Resolved* in what It undertakes, were not engaged in it. And hence it is, that we find those *Imperial terms* [*I will*] and [*Ye shall*] so much in use about this Matter. *Thus* the Lord began with the Serpent ; (which was a leading Case to all that follows,) *It [shall] bruise thine head* : In which compendious word, the destruction of Satan and Sin, is effectually provided for : And elsewhere He speaks as much for quick'ning the Soul ; *I [will] put my Spirit within you, and [cause] you to walk in My Statutes ; Ye [shall] be my People, and I [Will] be your God ; [They shall] Return unto*

me with their whole heart ; (with many Others.) The Lord still utters Himself in terms of *Omnipotency*, as putting-forth an *Almightiness* of Power ; which, as it needs not, so it will not, (yea, it cannot, with a *Salvo* to his honour) admit the least Dependence upon *Created* power, to make it successfull : *His word shall not Return unto him void ; It shall accomplish that which He pleaseth, and prosper in the thing whereto He sends it : He that was dead, comes forth at his word, though bound hand and foot.* Isa. 55. 11. John. 11. 44.

II. *Conversion* is a *Creation-work* ; which (though done by degrees) must be gon-thorow with, and that by Him who layd the foundation ; Or all the foregoing parts (for want of a Cap-stone) will moulder and come to nothing. As when *Adam* was to be made, The Lord first prepares the *Earth* ; then moulds it in such a *form* ; and then *breathes into him the breath of life* ; Els, that *lump* had never been a *living Soul* : So, in the New Creation ; The Lord works, and goes-on to work, and leaves it not, until He hath set it going. He doth not onely cause the light to shine into darkness ; but gives withall a *suitable understanding* ; a faculty *connatural* with the object ; as without which, the darkness would never comprehend it. *Ezekiel* might have prophesied till *Doom's day*, ere those dry bones would have liv'd, if the Lord Himself had not *caused* breath to enter into them : And, probably, He is called *The Father of lights*, (plurally) to denote, that as well the light *comprehending*, (or *capacitating* our comprehension) is from God ; as *That* to be *comprehended* : In His light we see light. 1 Joh. 5. 20. Joh. 1. 5. Jam. 1. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Psal. 36. 9.

III. God's *Effectual Working* in this Matter, and the Necessity of His so working, may also be Argued from the common sense of those already wrought upon, and brought-in ; by whose Prayers and Confessions it is evident, That they still needed a powerfull and effectual influence to *Carry-on* the Work already begun : *Turn Thou Me and I shall be Turned ; Quicken us and we will call upon Thee ; Draw me, and We will Run after thee ; Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think anything, but our sufficiency is of God ; I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. &c.* Hence it readily follows Gall. 2. 20.

follows, That if those already Turned, and made partakers of the Divine nature, whose hearts are in the good wayes of God, and who desire Nothing more than to Walk in them ; cannot yet keep themselves *Going*, without a *Continued Efficacious* Influx and Spring from *Above* ; Much-less can the Natural Man (without the like Supernatural and Divine Efficacy) effectually bend himself to a Compliance with them: ~~It is~~ *It is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.*

Prov. 13. 19.

IV.

I V. If the Lord did not Work Effectually, He should loose the honour of His work. If the *Efficacy* of Grace should depend on the humane Will ; (i. e. If Grace be rendered *Effectual* by some Motion or Act of the Will, which Grace is not the Author of) Then will Nature assume the *Priority* ; *Works* will glory over *Grace* ; and *Free-will* will be said to be *better* then *Free-Grace* : For, that *the less is blessed of the Better, is without contradiction* ; And that, that which sanctifies, is Greater than that which is Sanctified by it, is so obvious, That Christ appeals it to the Reason of *Fools* and *Blinde*. If therefore you will grant, That Grace is Better than Nature ; Follow it must, That the Will is *Blessed* and *Sanctified* by *Grace*, viz. by its *powerful* and *effectual* operation upon it. And here (indeed) lies the honour and efficacy of *Grace* ; Not in a Vincible Moving, Exciting, Perswading, or Threatening the Will to a compliance ; but in making the Will actually and willingly compliant with *It self*. And thus the Lord Doth, and thus He will Do, where ever He will be Gracious ; tho' never so much against the present minde and natural propension of the subject : And yet, there's no such thing as *Forcing* the Will ; As you may see afterwards.

Heb. 7. 7.

Math. 23. 19.

V.

V. The Doctrine of *Effectual Calling* is further confirmed from the office of Christ as a *Redeemer* ; which was not only to *purchase*, but to put us in *actual possession* of the good things He purchased for us. *Redemption* and *Reconciliation* are Relates, Comensurate, and Inseparable : It is not onely a *Reconcilable* state that Redemption puts us into, but a state of *actual* Reconcilement ; It *slays the enmity, makes an end of Sin, and brings-in everlasting Righteousness*. On this

Eph. 1. 7.

Eph. 2. 13, 16.

Heb. 2. 17.

Rom. 5. 9 & 10.

Coll. 1. 20, 21,

22.

Dan. 9. 24.

this accompt our Saviour bears that glorious title, *Thou shalt call His name Jesus* ; for he shall save His people from their sins : and, *For this Cause was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil*. Now, of these works, *Blindness* of mind is the first-born, and foster-mother to all the Rest ; 'tis *this* keeps the soul in unbelief, as under locks and bars ; and therefore must, of necessity, be dispell'd ; which can onely be done by causing the true light to shine *Effectually* ; as He did the light of this world in the first Creation ; which the Apostle, in 2 Cor. 4. 6, Resembles it to. Hence those frequent mentions of His being sent *To open the blind eyes, To give light to them that sit in darkness*, And to bring forth the Prisoners from the Prison-house : which may not be valued as things in design, yet lyable to obstruction ; but, to be as certainly perform'd as that Christ should dye. In the 107 Psal : it is spoken of as *done already* ; He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder : And that he speaks it of, *Redeemed-Ones*, appears by v. 2. First take them as in *Darkness* ; and he is so to give them light, as to *guide their feet into the way of peace*. That story of the blind Man in the 8 Mark, is a pertinent shadow of it ; Christ spits on his eyes, and puts His hands upon him ; as yet he saw but darkly, *Men as Trees walking* : but He puts His hands on him *agen*, and dismisses him not until He had made him see *clearly*. Then take them as Prisoners, (and Prisoners in the pit ;) and he that will Deliver them, must not onely open the Grate, but disarm their guard, knock off their shackles, and [*bring them forth*] as the Angel did Peter, even *whiles the keepers stood afore the door* ; He so Calleth His Sheep, that He *leadeth them out* : and this He doth by the blood of His Covenant ; 'tis *That* makes those in the Pit to be Prisoners of hope. And these Effects, as duly flow from Redemption as light from the Sun : 'tis therefore expressly said, *That the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all Sin* : And that we are sanctified through the offering of His Body. This gave the Apostle to argue so positively, in Rom : 6, *That if planted together in His death, we shall be also in His Resurrection*.

- chap. 5. 9, 10. *relation : and to put that Emphasis upon it, in chap. 5. That, If Reconciled to God by the death of His Son ; [Much more] shall we be saved by His life. That saying of Christ, in the 10th. of John, is much to our purpose ; And other Sheep I have ; Them also must I bring, and they shall bear my voice: This [Must] imports a duty not to be dispensed with ; He had received a Commandment for it from the Father : And*
- Joh. 10. 16. *this [Shall,] that Effectual working whereby they are made to believe. The Sheep of themselves, lye as cross to this work, as other Men ; (what have I to do with thee ? cries the posselt Gadaren) but being His sheep, He must make them willing. But suppose they stopp their ears ? Then*
- ver. 18. *He is to bore them ; for He received gifts for the Rebellions. Mens Averfeness does not loose Christ his Right ; nor shall it render his work ineffectual. For this very end, God raised him up, viz. To bless His People in turning them from their iniquities, and to give them Repentance ; and that such as hath Forgiveness of Sins annexed to it : Which also He doth as a Prince ; i. e. As One invested with Power to Remove whatever might lett the effect of His work : To*
- Mark. 5. 7.
Psal. 110.
Isa. 29. 22 & 24
Psal. 68. 18. *Him are committed the keys of hell and of Death. From these premises I safely conclude, That what Christ as a Redeemer came to do, that He doth and will do ; and that None of His work shall fall to the ground. What He saith in the 17 John, is propheticall of what He will say at the latter day ; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do ; Of all that Thou hast given me, I have lost Nothing ; I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest Me : I have given them the words which thou gavest Me,*
- Acts. 3. 26.
chap. 5. 31. *and they have received them.*
- Rev. 1. 18. *More might be added ; but by these I hope it is evident, That Jesus Christ was not only a Redeemer, to pay our Ransom ; but the Officer appointed of God, to set us at liberty, even that glorious liberty of the Sons of God : and This is that pleasure of the Lord which shall prosper in His hand.*
- Joh. 17. 6 & 8.
- Isa. 53. 10.

II. *Freely.*

All that God doth for Men, or Gives to them, in order to their Salvation, is Given and Done *freely*. Now, a thing is then said to be *thus* Given or Done, when it proceeds from the meer Good will and favour of Him that Worketh, or Giveth; without respect to any thing done or deserved by the Receiver: It is a *voluntary* act; supposing Dan. 2. 39. no obligation on him that gives, Nor attractive or obliging virtue, in him that receives; nor yet, expectation of Recompense from him.

Much need not be said to prove the *free-giving* of the things we are speaking of, Did we duly consider three particulars:

1. The Sovereign Greatness of Him that gives; It is the *Most High God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth*; Who is Infinitely and Independently blessed in Himself; and therefore, cannot be Added unto, nor Receive from any Creature: Who can give to Him, that gives to *All* their life and breath?

2. The superexcellent, and unspeakable worth of the things that are Given: The first and Chief, is our Lord Jesus Christ; whose dignity is such, That Heaven and Earth are too low a price to set Him at; (especially, To be given as He was:) and in Him, Righteousness and Strength; Adoption and Reconciliation; Grace and Glory.

3. The vanity and wretchedness of those on whom they are bestowed: Both Scripture and Experience, speak nothing of them in their Naturals; but what bespeaks a Condition every way deplorable, and incapable of yielding Motives for such a Gift; as is shewn afore.

But being so greatly in love with our selves, and fond of our own improvements; and so stiffly bent to a Covenant of works: To help us off from those dangerous bottoms, let us dwell a while on the following Considerations.

I. What is the Nature and Import of the *Covenant of Grace*. This Covenant is that, which all professing Christians profess to be saved by; how-ever they differ about the Import and Latitude of it. But, if we receive the Scriptural Notion, (which needs must be the Rightest) we shall finde, That it is of the very Nature and Substance of this Covenant, To give *freely* and *absolutely*; without Conditioning for any thing to be done by Men, as the ground and Motive thereof. *All* that God doth for those He will save, is for *His Name sake*; which Name is recorded in *Exod. 34. 5 & 6, The Lord God, Gracious and Merciful, &c.* To be Gracious, is To doe well to one that deserves ill: And if otherwise, it would be but after the Covenant of Works, or first Covenant: Which yet was not faulty or defective in it self; for it gave a sufficiency to obtain the benefits contained in it; which if they had used and improv'd as they might, there would not have needed a second. But, the Lord forknowing the Creature's mutability; and consequently, what need there would be of another kind of Power and Grace, than *that Adam* was Created with; Did therefore determine of a second; which in *Tit. 1. 2*, is called, *The hope of Eternal life, which God who cannot lye, promised before the World began.*

It is called the *Covenant of Grace*, not onely as designing the Glory of His Grace, in the saving of men; but as giving *freely*, and of mere Grace and Favour, what-ever must bring-about that Salvation: For, Where els can lye the difference between the two Covenants? It cannot be in respect of the *easiness* and *difficulty*, of the duties enjoyned by either; For, Faith and Repentance are much more above the compass of natural power, than to forbear the forbidden Tree: But the difference lyes in this, That the New Covenant consists of *better* Promises; And, this *Betterness* stands in the Free, Absolute, Independent engagement of God Himself, to Invest His Covenanted Ones, with all things conducing to the Blessedness held forth; And that, as well what is to be done on *their* part, as on *His Own* upon their doing of it; That is, (plainly) To Give to them and
Work

Work in them, *Whatever* in this Covenant He requires of them. The law shews matter of Duty, but gives not where-with to perform it ; The Covenant of Grace does both, by writing the law in the heart. And without this, it would still have been but a Covenant of *works*, be the Duties enjoined what ever you will. It therefore runs not upon *Conditional* or *Failable* terms, (I will [If] ye will :) but *Absolute* and *Sovereign*, [I will] and [ye shall.] This Covenant does not only give life upon terms of Believing ; but Faith also and Holiness, as the necessary means of attaining that life : And this, not upon your ingenuous compliance, (as some term it) or better improvement of what you have in common with other Men ; (such allegations the Lord disallows, and often Cautions against,) but of *Grace*. It's a Covenant made-up of *Promises* ; and *Promise* (by Scripture intendment) is alwayes *Free* ; both freely *made* and freely *perform'd* ; without the desert or procurement of Men. Take Isaac for instance ; Abraham's body was now dead ; and Sarah, (besides her natural barrenness) *it ceased* Gen.18.11. *to be with her after the manner of Women* ; and yet, Sarah ver.14. *shall have a Son*. But, How ? The Promise had in it (though Abraham and Sarah had not) whatever might tend to Isaac's conception and birth ; and for this cause, He was called *The* Gal. 4. 23, 28. *Son of the Promise* ; as also *Believers* are, Rom. 9.8. Gal. 3. 29. They are also termed, *Heirs of Promise*, Heb. 6. 17. And, on this account, Christ is called *The Promised Seed* ; and the Holy Ghost, *The Spirit of Promise*. viz, To shew the *Independent freeness* of those Divine Gifts : The Promise of sending them ; Their actual Coming ; and Effectual operations, are all free, and free in all respects : This *Dew from the Lord waiteth not for Men*.

Mic. 5. 7.

For further illustration, the Jews are a pertinent Instance, as ye read in Jer.32. from v. 30. to the 36. They had done nothing but evil, from their youth up ; and were a *continual provocation* : And when scattered among the Nations, they were no-whit bettered ; but caused, even the Heathen to blaspheme : And yet, notwithstanding all this, the Lord *will Gather them*, and *give them an heart to fear Him*

for ever, v. 37. to v. 44. : And this, even whiles they were not moved, *neither could they blush*, chap. 8. 12. See also, with what inexpressible freeness of Grace, the Lord deals with them, in Isa. 43. v. 25. *I, even I, am He that blottereth out thy transgressions,--and will not remember thy sins.* But, what's the Introduction to this so great a Promise ? See it, and wonder at it ! *Thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob ; but, thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel : Thou hast not brought Me the small Cattel of thy burnt Offerings ; Thou hast bought Me no sweet Cane with thy money ; --but, hast made Me to serve with thy sins, and wearied Me with thine iniquities : I, even I (whom thou hast dealt so ingratulity with, and disingenuously, even I) am He that blottereth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake.* And this was a Great thing they looked not for ; As (indeed) considering themselves and what their demeanour had been, they had no Reason to look for it.

Hence 'tis cleer, That Grace respects not the *worthiness* of Men in what It does for them ; Nay, it must respect their *Unworthiness* rather, as that by which Grace is more illustrated, and the glory thereof more advanced ; according to Rom. 5. 20. *Where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound.* And Paul proclaims it as verified on himself, 1 Tim. 1. 13. *I was a Blasphemer, and a Persecutour, and Injurious : But I obtained Mercy ; --and the Grace of our Lord was [exceeding abundant] --v. 14 ;* and hereupon he falls to Adorning that Grace ; Now, to the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen ; v. 17.

The Riches of Mercy is made-out by *Saving the Chief of sinners* ; and in *quicken*ing us when dead, Ephes. 2. 1 & 4. And it's very observable, That the Apostles (when ever they mention the Grace of God in *Saving, Quickening, &c.*) do not give the least intimation of Mens *Worthiness, Preparedness, Compliance*, or any such thing ; but [*Dead in Sins*] and [*Quickening*] come one in the neck of the other ; as light does upon darkness, which, in no sort, induces the light, or prepares the dark Earth or Ayre for it : as is abundantly evident

evident in all their Epistles. And how oft, (and in good earnest) does the Lord declare against all the pretensions of Men, as to their *activeness* in this Matter, in *Isaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, Hosea, &c.* And as a barr to those pretensions, *The Holy People*, He calls *A People sought-out*; and, that *He is found of them that sought Him not*; with many others. This I shall end, with a very observable Instance within my own Memory: (and I bring it not in for proof, but Illustration) I knew a Man, who when he came under convictions, endeavoured with all his might to still them: His Convictions grew stronger, and he hardened himself against them. He saw their tendency; but so opposite to it, that he resolv'd in express terms, [He would not be a Puritan, what-ever came of it.] To the Church he must go; (His Master would have it so:) But, this was his wont, To loll o'r the seat, with his fingers in both his ears; (Here, *General* or *Conditional* Grace was (surely) non-plus'd). But a Chosen Vessel must not so be lost; Now steps in *Electing Grace*, and by a casual slip of his Elbows, drew-out the Hoppers, and sent-in a Word, (from the Pulpit) which, like fire from Heaven, melted his heart, and cast it in a New Mould. Surely, in this, the Lord did not wait for the Man's compliance or improvements; His work was not Originated *thence*, nor dependent thereon.

II. If all that *pertains* to Salvation were not given freely, Salvation it self should not be of Grace: For, *to him that worketh is the Reward not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt*: Rom. 4.4. But, Salvation is of Grace, Ephes. 2.5. *By Grace ye are saved*. And agen, v.8. *By Grace ye are saved, through Faith*; Where also, lest the adding of Faith, should occasion (in their esteem) a lessening of this Grace, or seem to detract from the *Freeness* of it; he cautiously subjoyns, *That this Faith is the work of that Grace* [Not of your selves, *It is the Gift of God.*] For, if Grace be perfectly free in *Choosing*, it must be answerably free, in *Giving* and *Applying* the Means to bring-about the *End* it hath chosen us to: For, if the Effect of the Means should depend upon something to be done by Men, (which Grace is not the Doer of) then works

works would put-in for a share in the glory of Mens salvation, and so the Grace of God would be dethron'd, and be as if it were not; *Grace is no more Grace*, as is argued in *Rom. 11. 6.*

III.

III. Spiritual blessings must be given *freely*, and of *pure Grace*, because the Natural Man cannot perform any such Act, as might be Motive for such a gift. Things *materially* good they may doe; (as *Cain* in offering the first fruits) but not acceptable, because not done in the due manner, that is, in Faith: the want of which makes *In-cense* it self *an abomination*. If without Faith it be impossible to please God; then it must be impossible to doe ought afore you believe, that may move God to give you Faith. Salvation is promised to Faith, Remission of sins to Repentance, The blessed vision to Purity of heart; -But we find not these Graces promised to any Act or Qualification inferiour to, or precedeing the Graces themselves: Our *holy Calling*, and *the washing of Regeneration*, we are not entit'led-to by *works of our own*.

Iia. 1. 13, 14.

2 Tim. 1. 9.
Tit. 3. 5.

IV.

IV. If any of the Requisites to Salvation should be given upon conditions, Reason would it should be *That* which in worth and virtue containeth all the Rest; and without which, the Rest had never been, or been of none effect; And that is, Our Lord Jesus Christ; of whom it is said, *That all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily*: and that, *Out of His Fullness all Grace is received*. The giving of whom, was the most superlative commendation of God's love to Men; and is therefore termed, *That Gift of God*; *Joh. 4. 10.* And as touching the *Free and Unconditionate* giving of Christ, we have an authentic Record in *Gen. 3. 15.* *It shall bruise thy head*: Which words doe contain an Absolute, free Promise to send the Son of God in the Nature of Man, to be a Redeemer. And we evidently know, That His *actual* coming and performance thereof, was not suspended upon any good thing to be done by Men: How could it, when after the Fall, they did not nor could co: any thing, but what might turn His heart against them?

Coll. 2. 9.
Joh. 1. 16.
Rom. 5. 8.

For

For evidence hereof, We need not go out of the Context ; Doe but observe the First *Adam's* Carriage, and the Manner of it, just afore the Promise was made : First, They believe the Serpent rather than God ; Then they break the Commandment of life, when they had neither need nor occasion so to do. This done, and finding themselves lost, they do not so much as *seek* after God for help, but rather to *hide* themselves from Him : so farr from confessing themselves faulty, that they charge God foolishly, and thist the blame of their miscarriage upon Him ; *The woman whom [Thou] gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree---* And *the Serpent* (which also is a Creature of thy Making) *he beguiled me* &c. Here's nothing in their deportment, that looks *like* the Motive of such a Promise. But, tho' they Run from God, He will not so part with them ; yea, He follows them, finds them out, and for a door of hope *freely* prounceth this gracious Promise, of sending One to destroy this old serpent, the Devil ; and consequently the Serpentine Nature, that had now instill'd and mingled it self with theirs. It is the first promulgation of the Gospel, and speaks with as much absoluteness as words can express, *It [Shall] bruise thy head*. This I shall stand the more upon, because it is the *First* that was made in *Time*, and *Thar* out of which, all *following* Promises are educed.

The intent of this Promise, was *Adam's* Recovery and Comfort ; who (doubtless) at this time, was in a very disconsolate Condition, as lying under a fresh sense of the happiness he had lost, and the wofull estate he was now plunged into : And therefore, 'twas necessary, (if *Adam* shall have Comfort by it) that the terms thereof be altogether free and Absolute. For, suppose them to be Conditional, as, (namely) If *Adam* shall now repent and Convert himself; If he shall better improve a second stock; (or rather, the cankered Remnant of that he had at first,) My Son *Then* shall come into this lower World, to still that Enemy and Avenger ; His life shall go for thy life, I will be friends with thee, and restore thee to thy first Estate. All this, and more of this kind, had yielded but little comfort or
hope.

hope to a guilty and defiled Conscience; who found himself not onely naked and wholly bereft of his Primitive Righteousness; but at enmity with his Creatour, and a bondslave to Satan : For, such Reasonings as these, would have broke in like a flood, to bear-down and itifle all hopes of future success ; viz. If when I was in so blessed a state, and endued with power to keep it ; upon so slight a temptation I yielded and fell ; How should I Rise now I am down and my strength is gon ? If when I had freedom of Will and stood upright, so easily I warp'd into crooked paths ; How can I hope to Return and do better, now my Will is perverted, and bent to a contrary course ? If whilst I had eyes in my head, and saw things with cleerness, I yet lost my way and wandered ; How should I think to recover it, being now both sadly bewildred, and my eyes put-out ? How should I bring a clean thing out of an unclean, who kept not my heart clean when it was so ? How should I gain more with fewer talents, who ran my self out of all when I had abundantly more ? Grapes will not grow upon Thorns, nor Figs on Thistles : Nay, were my Primitive state restored agen, on the former terms ; I could not expect to keep it, having this wofull experience of so causeless and dreadfull an Apostacy, &c.

It was therefore importantly necessary, that this first Promise, made upon so great and solemn an occasion, and bearing in it all the hopes and comforts of God's People to Eternity ; should be *thorowly free and absolute*, and not depend (in the least) upon any good thing to be done by Men, as a condition of it.

And if Christ be given *freely*, there's good ground of arguing thence, the free-giving of *lesser* things ; as doth the Apottle in *Rom. 8*, *He that spared not His Son, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things ? Is not the life more than meat ?* Is not Christ more than Faith and all Grace ? Has God given us the flesh of His Son, which is Meat indeed ; and will He not restore our withered hand to receive it ? It cannot be ; especially considering, That *this* may be done with a *Word* ; and without *This*, the Other would be lost, and as water spilt on the ground.

But,

But, though this Promise of Christ, be virtually a Promise of all Grace; yet, because of our slowness of heart to believe, and to win us off from our legallizing Notions; the Lord condescends to gratify His People in *Words* as well as *Substance*: And therefore,

V. To make it expressly evident, that all Spiritual blessings are *perfectly free*, He hath put them all into *Absolute* Promises.

Not that all Promises run in that tenor: Many of them have Conditions annex'd; which also (in their place) are of very significant usefulness: 1. As proofs of our willing Subjection to God. 2. Directives by what Mediums we must get-to the Blessedness design'd us. 3. How we must be qualified for the enjoyment of it. 4. As Marks and Evidences of our being in the way to it; and of those to whom it doth belong. But, this Annexion of Conditions, does not imply a power in Men to perform them; (tho' perform'd they must be, before we enjoy the promised Good;) Nor does the effect of those Promises depend upon any Act to be done by us, which some other Promise doth not provide us with. But,

That Great Fundamental Promise, on which is founded our hopes of Eternal life, was *Absolute*; ('twas given afore the world;) Though dearly conditional to Him with whom the Compact was made; yet perfectly free and Absolute to us: And therefore the adding of Conditions to After-Promises, may not be taken as invalidating that *First* Promise, Or as a Defeazance to it: It's a Scripture Maxim, That the Covenant which was before confirmed of God in Christ, the Law which was Four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul; that it should make the Promise of none effect. The like may be said of Promises made in Time; viz, That the Conditionality of Some, does not make void the Absoluteness of Others. As the Law was to Christ, such are Conditional Promises to the *Absolute*; They shew what we should be and do, and (by consequence) that we can neither be nor do as we should; and thence Inferred, The Necessity of Divine Grace to undertake for us: And then (indeed) is the Free-

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ness of Grace adorable, which promiseth help in terms of an Absolute tenor. And accordingly we find, That whatever is, in one Scripture, made the Condition of Acceptance with God, and Eternal life; In other Scriptures those very Conditions are promised without Condition: Some of which we have a Prospect of in the following balance.

Conditional Promises.

Wash ye, make you clean; Cease to doe evil; learn to doe well: Come now, and tho' your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, Isa. 1. 16, 18.

Repent and turn; so iniquity shall not be your ruin, Ezek. 16. 30. Make you a new heart, and a new spirit, v. 31.

Hear and your Soul shall live, Isa. 50. 3. If thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with thy whole heart, Deut. 4. 29.

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, Deut. 10. 6.

Return O backsliding Children, Jer. 3. 14.

Promises of the Condition.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: From all your filthiness will I cleanse you; *Ezek. 36. 25.* I will forgive your iniquity; and your sin I will remember no more, *Jer. 31. 33.*

I will put a new spirit within you, *Ezek. 11. 19.* A new heart also will I give you; and a new Spirit will I put within you, chap. 36. 26.

Thou shalt return, and obey the voyce of the Lord, *Deut. 30. 8.* They shall return unto Me with their whole heart, *Jer. 24. 7.* I am found of them that sought me not, *Isa. 65. 1.*

The Lord thy God will Circumcise thine heart, *Deut. 30. 6.*

I will heal their Backslidings, *Hosea, 14. 4.*

If

Conditional Promises.

Promises of the Condition.

If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land, Isa. 1.19.

I will yet for this be enquired of by the House of Israel, Ezek. 36.37.

He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved, Math. 24.13.

Thy People shall be willing, *Psal. 110. 3.* I will cause you to walk in my Statutes, *Ezek. 36. 27. Phil. 2. 13.*

I will pour upon the House of David, the Spirit of Grace and Supplications, *Zach. 12.10.*

They shall not depart from me, *Jer. 32. 40.* Who shall confirm you unto the End, *1 Cor. 1. 8. Jer. 3. 19.*

These are some of those Many exceeding-Great and Precious promises, by which we are made partakers of the Divine Nature : And if duly consider'd, would much conduce to establish the present Truth, which asserts the Absolute free-giving of *All things pertaining to life and Godliness* ; And this, nothing more plainly contradicts, than to make the Dispensments of Grace to depend on the Wills and improvements of *Natural Men* : To shut-out which, is a principal scope of Absolute Promises ; *That no flesh should glory in His presence : Since it is God that worketh all in all, and That of His own good pleasure.* 2 Pet. 1.4.
ver.3.

Now, If any should ask, (by the way) Wherein the special love of God to Elect persons discovers it self before their Conversion ?

I cannot assigne any plain or Open discoveries of it, by which the Elect may be known from other Men : All outward things fall alike to all : *The heir, whiles a Child, differs nothing from a Servant ; altho' he be Lord of all,* (by Election) *Gal. 4.1.* Yet there are divers gracious operations of that love towards them, even in common providences ; Albeit, they are not perceiv'd till afterwards ; As

1. In keeping-alive the Root or Stem they were to grow from ; which might be a principal cause of His adding 15.

B b 2

years

years to *Hezekiah's* life ; viz. for *Josiah's* sake who was to come of his lineage ; *Manasseh* his grandfather not being yet born. So, those dayes of tribulation were shortened, and many of the Jewes kept alive, (by the Providence of God) for the Elect's sake, that should be of their progeny, (perhaps two thousand years after.)

Psal. 57.3.

Job 33.24.

2. In preserving the Elect themselves from many a death which they were obnoxious to, before their Conversion ; As He also did *Manasseh* : And this was the Cause, when Satan had them in his Nett, and had drag'd them to the pits brink, That the Lord sent from Heaven and saved them : Deliver him, I have found a Ransom : He is Mine, and I have designed him to another end.

3. In keeping them from the unpardonable Sin : Thus *Paul* (being a Chosen Vessel) was kept without that knowledge of Christ, which some of the Pharisees had : For otherwise, his persecuting the Church of God had bin incapable of pardon ; as appears by 1 Tim. 1. 13. *I obtained Mercy, because I did it ignorantly.*

Acts 18.9.

4. In casting the lot of their habitation, where He hath planted, or will plant the means of Grace: Or bringing them by His Providence, where some effectual Word shall be spoken to them : The One is verified in those who dwelt at *Corinth*, Where *Paul* must preach and not hold his peace ; For (sayes the Lord to him) *I have much People in this City.* The Other, in those who were come to *Jerusalem* at the feast of *Pentecost*, from all parts of the World ; Which gave them the opportunity of coming together, and of hearing *Peter's* Sermon ; By Means whereof, Thousands of them were converted. It is farther exemplified by the instance of the *Eunuch*, Acts 8. 27 : As also in the story of *Zacheus*, whose intent reach'd no higher but to see what manner of person Christ was, being so much talk'd of abroad ; And there Salvation meets both him and his house.

Luke 19.3,5.

There are Nevertheless divers things alledged, (by way of objection) against this Doctrine : which yet, the Scriptures, with Reasons drawn from thence, and sanctified experience

perience, doe afford a plentiful Bar and Answer to : And this service they have done, to bring some things to mind, (before omitted) that may prove to the further cleering and confirmation of the Truth.

All men universally, Others as well as those you call the Elect, have a sufficiency of Means for Salvation?

If this were true, it would follow ; Either, that faith and repentance are not of those Means ; for all men have them not : Or els, that men may Repent and Believe, and yet fall short of Salvation ; for, all men are not saved. We goe not about to lessen the Means afforded to any ; Or their sin in Neglecting or Not living-up to the Means they have: and yet we cannot assent, That *all* men *Now* have such a sufficiency.

1. Preaching in parables, was not a Means proper for Conversion : yet thus did Christ frequently speak to the multitude. Nor was it intended for Conversion ; for, He thus did, *That in hearing they might not understand.* If it Mark.4.12. he said, They had the Gospel afterwards more plainly preach'd by the Apoiles ; I answer, That then they had it not so afore; and *That* contradicts the objection. Some (indeed) among the *Jews*, by the evident testimonies of Christ's Divinity, were Convinc'd, That He was the *Messiah* but it came not up to a perfect work ; They did not Joh.12.42. Confess Him : And why ? Because *the Arm of the Lord* Isa.53.1. *was not Revealed to them* : That is, (as *Moses* speaks) *The Lord had not given them an heart to understand.* Deut.29.4.

2. Sufficiency is to be estimated by success : *That* which doth not accomplish the End, cannot be said to be sufficient. If you say, It proves successlesse, because men will not Comply with it ; It is answered, That a *Willingness* to comply, is a part of the Means ; which if they have not, they have not Means *sufficient*. A power to Will, without a Will to use that Power, will signifie no more than an Arm without strength. But what think ye of those who are *without God and without hope* ? Is this to be boasted of, and relied upon ? Or is it not a deplorable kind of sufficiency Eph.2.12. that

that leaves men in a Godless and hopeless condition?

If it be said agen; They had a sufficiency, but by their misusing thereof, they lost it? Let me ask; Can there be a more palpable proof of a thing's insufficiency, than its inability to preserve it self? and the general successlessness of it? But,

3. Means may be proper enough, and (in their kind) sufficient, towards the production of such an event; and yet, the Event never succeed, for want of something els which also was requisite for it. Planting and Watering, are proper and sufficient, as means and second Causes; and yet, they are nothing as to success, without the special operation of God. Who could Reason more strongly than *Paul*? or speak more eloquently than *Apollo*? and yet the success of their Ministry was *as God gave to every Man*. It is God that *openeth the ear to discipline, and sealeth instruction*; when His hand is sett-to, then 'tis Authentick and powerful, and not before: This is further Confirm'd by the following Instance; The Jewes had means of being purged, and yet they were not purged; *Ezek. 24. 13.* But in chap. 36. 25. The Lord takes the work into His own hand; *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: From all your filthiness and from all your Idols will I cleanse you: A New heart also will I give you--* and so on to v. 28. By which it appears That the Lord will not only afford them *Means*, as aforetime, and leave the improvement thereof to themselves; (For, that He saw would not do :) But *Now* He will take the whole upon Himself; as ye have it in *Jeremy*, *I will bring it health and Cure, and I will Cure them. I will cause them to walk in my Statutes and do them*: That is, He will give them an *honest and Good heart*, which shall *bring-forth fruit to perfection*. These are the Means proper and sufficient to Salvation; and less than this, will not do it.

Men have as full a sufficiency of Means, as is just and meet for God to give?

1. I would ask, whether it be just and meet to do good? And if it be, Why not the Chiefest Good that men are capable

1 Cor. 3. 5.
Job 36. 10.
ch. 33. 16.

Jer. 33. 6.

Luke 8. 15.

ble of; Which is, To have their hearts turned to God, and United to Him for ever?

2. The Objection seems to attribute more to Man, in the business of his salvation, than to God: For, If *all* that God can *justly* or *Meetly* do in order thereunto, will not Save him, without something done by himself, which God is not the Doer of; then will Man be reckoned for *Chief Agent* in the work; and so, the *Ax will boast it self against Him that handles it.* Suppose a Plaister or Medicine to be made of Twenty Ingredients; and one of them to be of that Sovereign virtue, as to influence all the Rest: All which, if that be wanting, will but ulcerate the wound, and heighten the distemper; That *One* must needs be reputed the Principal. Iſa. 10. 15.

3. It is not to be supposed, That the Great and onely Wife God would set-up a Creature whose will He cannot justly and meetly Over-rule; especially, in things requisite to the very *End* for which he was made. Nor, that he should make him for *such* an End, as that any thing conducible thereto, may not be justly and meetly done for him, in order to its accomplishment.

4. It cannot be Righteous or Meet for Men to Affirm, nor for the honour of Sovereign Majesty to admit, That the Creature's will should limit, divert, or frustrate, the will and Intent of their Creatour: It was Religiously said of One, *I will not have him for my God, [who hath not power over my Will.]*

5. Suppose a man craz'd in his head, and you intend him an honour or office, which he never will be capable of without the full use of his Reason; Is it not *meeter*, and doth it not argue an higher degree of love, Prudence, and Justice, to cure his distemper, (though in a way contrary to his present mind) than to Wait his complying with your prescriptions, which (as he is) he'l never understand? And what hinders, but that God may do so by his People, Even give them an heart to know Him, and to fear Him for ever? Save only, that this Quaggy principle of Man's *freedom of Will*, will not Comport with it.

But.

But if a sufficiency of Means to Repent and Believe, be not afforded to All; how shall God be just in punishing for Neglects?

The Justice of God will not need our Salving, especially by a balm of our own making: Whether He judge or justify, He is Just in what He doth; tho' purblind Reason sees not *How*. His Judgments are a great Deep; and it follows not, That there's no bottom, because our line will not Reach it. God dealt not so (in respect of Means) with any Nation as with *Israel*; And the Men going with *Paul* to *Damascus*, the Lord would not give them to see His face, nor to hear His voice; (both which He vouchsafed to *Paul*;) and yet He needs no vindication or Apologie, for punishing their unbelief: *They that have sinned without law shall perish without law.*

Rom. 2. 12.

2. Men are justly obnoxious to punishment, for Neglecting, or Not-improving the means they have; albeit those Means (when made the best of, that Nature can) will not save them: They are punishable for Not-feeding and not-clothing; and yet, by doing these, Men are not justified. The least transgression layes open to wrath; and you cannot by keeping *some* Commands, compensate the breach of *Others*.

Where it is said, I will write my law in their hearts; and cause them to walk in my Statutes, &c. There is no more intended by it, but the Giving of Things or Means proper to such an End, if they will but Improve them?

Deut. 10. 16.
with 30. 6.
Ezek. 18. 31.
with ch. 36. 26

The sense objected, cannot be the mind and limit of that most gracious promise; For, the Promise is as broad as the Command; And if the Command carries in it, as much as the words of it do import, then also doth the Promise: But, the Command doth not enjoin only a Using the Means that tend to such a duty; but the actual and perfect performance of the Duty it self; Therefore doth likewise the Promise. Besides, the *heart* and *Will* are One; And if the law be written in the Will, then is the Will Compliant with what the Law commands: To write it in the heart, is to make

make it Natural ; and so 'tis more than a Means, It is the Thing it self.

2. That Doctrine is hardly bestead, and not much to be credited; which (for its support) must put such a construction on the highest, and most absolute Promises that God hath made, as will render them weak and fruitless Things. Rev. 22. 18, 19.

3. Where God hath absolutely said, That such a thing *He will do* ; For Men to put-in Conditions or Limitations, is, To raze or interline a Record ; which is a *Felonious act* : And how He will deal with those who *add-to*, or *take-from* the words of His prophecy, you have recorded in the last Chapter of His book. It is ill trifling with Sacred things !

4. A Physician that undertakes to cure a Man of his phrensie, and to keep him in his right mind ; is not said to have done his Work, or made-good his Word (what ever Means have been applied to him) if the Patient continue his former distraction, or Relapse into it.

5. There is no need or Reason, why the Lord should Promise, or make shew of Promising, *more* than He intends to perform ; (for, That would be as a broken staff ;) Or, Why He should express himself in terms of a *fuller*, or more *absolute* Engagement, than might in all points consist with His Wisdom, Justice, Holiness, &c.

6. Lastly, The Objection is further excepted against and rejected ; Not onely as it makes Man the chief Agent in his own salvation ; but as denying, That God doth any thing more for them that are *Saved*, than for them that *perish* : If Men make themselves to differ, the Gospel-designe of *Magnifying Grace*, is dash'd at once.

But, is it not said, To him that hath shall be given ? i. e. He that Improves what he hath shall have more ; If they use Common Grace well, they shall have Special ?

1. The well-using of *Common-Grace*, is a duty that lies upon all : but is no way Meriting, or Moving God to bestow

But if a sufficiency of Means to Repent and Believe, be not afforded to All; how shall God be just in punishing for Neglects?

The Justice of God will not need our Salving, especially by a balm of our own making: Whether He judge or justify, He is Just in what He doth; tho' purblind Reason sees not *How*. His Judgments are a great Deep; and it follows not, That there's no bottom, because our line will not Reach it. God dealt not so (in respect of Means) with any Nation as with *Israel*; And the Men going with *Paul* to *Damascus*, the Lord would not give them to see His face, nor to hear His voice; (both which He vouchsafed to *Paul*;) and yet He needs no vindication or Apologie, for punishing their unbelief: *They that have sinned without law shall perish without law.*

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But, is it not said, To him that hath shall be given ? i. e. He that Improves what he hath shall have more ; If they use Common Grace well, they shall have Special ?

1. The well-using of *Common-Grace*, is a duty that lies upon all : but is no way Meriting, or Moving God to bestow

the *special*: He is above all humane Motives; and is not wrought upon by them, as Men are: This is seen by *Paul*, whom *special* Grace took hold-upon, even whiles in the heat of misusing that which is Common: There was no space of time between his *being a Persecutor*, and his *obtaining Mercy*.

1 Tim. 1. 13.
with Acts, 9. 4.

2. What proportion is there (in value) between an handfull of Clay, and a Talent of Gold? Infinitely more is the disproportion between the Grace of *Faith*, and *all* that a Natural Man can do for the obtaining of it.

Act. 8. 18, 19

3. Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin; but a Man's Sin cannot be a Motive for his Good: Remember who it was, and what condition he was in, that profer'd money for the Gift of the Holy Ghost: Improvements for *Faith*, is but the same.

4. It would not become the Wisdom, Power, or Grace of God, to build on a Foundation made-ready to His hand; He needs it not, nor will it Sort with His Design; which is to have His Grace acknowledged the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Mens Salvation.

Joh. 3. 27.

5. Lastly, A *Will* to improve, is as much from God as the *Thing* to be Improved: A *Man* can receive nothing except it be Given him from above: The thing given, and power to receive or improve it, are both from Thence: And things from Above are not fetch'd down by Men; but they Come-down When and upon whom, the Father of lights pleaseth.

Jam. 1. 17.

Men are commanded To make them a New heart; which must imply, an Ability So to do: For, how can it be just, to require things impossible; And that under so severe a penalty?

Whatever is implied in the Command, such Allegations do surely imply, that the framers of them are much unacquainted with the Scriptures; or extreamly Rash in drawing Conclusions from them. There are Reasons enough, and holy ends, which do justly warrant such Commands, without supposing those to whom they are given, Able *Now* to perform them:--As

1. Per-

1. Perhaps, the Lord speaks it *Ironically*; Deriding their vain confidence, as *Elijah* did the Priests of *Baal*, when he bids them *Cry aloud, for he is a God*: Will you hence infer, That *Baal* was a God? Or that Idols can shew things to come, because the Lord bids them do it, thereby to Evidence their godhead? Or, that *Adam* had advantaged himself by his Fall, because the Lord says, *The Man is become like One of us*? The like form of speech is sometime used concerning *Babylon*; (*Take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed*;) even then when *His device was to destroy her*. So here, as upbraiding those carnal *Jews* with their fond opinion of *Self-sufficiency, Freedom of Will, and Power* to do great matters: *Make you a New heart, for why will ye dye?* q. d. You know, that the end of these things is death; you pretend to an high pitch of ability; That Men may be as Good as they will, and turn when they please; and yet you go on in an evil way; If you can make you a New heart, do it; Why will ye, by neglecting so easie a matter, fall under a sentence of Death?

2. To let them know, God hath not lost *His right of Commanding*, tho' Men have lost *their power of obeying*: Time was when they had it, and power to keep it; But, having lost it, God is not bound to restore it; nor unjust in punishing those neglects which arise from the want of it. It is man's duty *To seek after God*, tho' it be a [*Peradventure*] whether they shall find him or Not.

3. Hereby to convince them, what was that One thing necessary; (to wit) The change of the heart; as without which, all labour is spent in vain upon them; As in the parable of the Sower: The Root must be holy before the fruit; Grapes will not grow upon thorns; nor the Stony, Thorny, or Highway-ground, bring forth to perfection: When *Ephraim* was Turned, then he Repented, and not Afore.

4. That being convinced of the Necessity of such a change, and finding their own endeavours wholly ineffectual, (as *Paul* did;) They might see also, the Necessity of free-Grace, and of the Divine power, to do it for them; and so,

have their eyes turn'd-off from themselves, and drawn thitherwards; even towards those hills of Strength: which the Church had an eye to, when they prayed, *Turn thou me and I shall be Turned.*

Jer. 31. 18.

5. If the giving a Command from God, doth inferr in Men a power to obey; then it will follow, That Men have power to keep the whole law; and that, without turning aside, to the right hand or to the left; and to make themselves holy as God is Holy: (for, *these* are Commanded) But,

Deut. 5. 32.

6. That the Lord intends not such a Conclusion should be made upon His Command, appears from the 17 Jer. v. 1, *The Sin of Judah is written with a pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond; Graven on the table of their heart; i.e.* So, as not to be blotted-out by humane Wit or strength: And therefore,

Jer. 13. 23.

7. He tells them expressly, It is as impossible for them to make themselves a New heart, *as for the Ethiopian to change his skin: -- For, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? They that Sanctifie themselves, and they that offer Swines flesh, shall both be consumed together.*

IIa. 66. 17.

Why then are Men injoynd attendance on the Means, if there be so little in them?

If there were no other Reason or end, this were enough, *That God hath Commanded it: That binds us to use the Means, tho' not the Means to effect the thing it is used for: Nor is the Means so much to be considered, as God's Institution and appointment; Nor the use thereof to be Rested-on; but, the Grace and power of God giving influence thereto; Who Himself is not bound to Means or Method: Ordinarily, He is found in His own way; and out of it we are not to look for Him.*

But, To what end is the Gospell preached in terms universal, and Universally to All; if some particular and determinate persons onely, can Receive it?

The Counsel of God concerning Election is secret: The Minister knows not who are the objects of it; and therefore

fore must preach to All, according to his Commission. The 1 Sam. 9. 16.
 Lord deals in this, as in the Matter of lots : *Saul* was fore- with 10. 20, 21.
 appointed to be King; yet all *Israel* must come-together,
 and lots must be cast on the whole Nation, as if the person 1 Sam. 16. 5-10.
 were yet to be pitch'd-upon. The falling of the lot was whol-
 ly Contingent, as to Men; Another might have been taken
 as well as he it fell upon: But, the Lord disposeth it, and casts Prov. 16. 33.
 it on the right person. So, touching the Gospel, It is sent to a
 place where (perhaps) but one, or very few Elect persons
 are, and those only shall be taken by it; & yet, it must be pub-
 lished to the whole City promiscuously : But, the Holy
 Ghost, *Who knoweth the deep things of God*, brings it to the
 heart of those for whom it is intended; and there it fixeth :
 Which the Jaylor, *Lydia*, and other Examples, make
 evident.

*Man is a Rational Creature, and accordingly to be proceed-
 ed with: But this way and manner of Conversion, de-
 stroys all Freedom of Will; and makes Conversion a Com-
 pulsory thing*

The Will cannot be forced; Nor does this Doctrine
 hold-forth any such thing : A Man may be forced to
Act against his Will; but Not to *Will* against his will. He
 may *will* that to day, which yester day he willed *not* ;
 But, this Change is so far from being an Infringement, that
 'tis rather an effect and demonstration of his Freedom.

There be three sorts of Compulsion; Violent, Natural,
 and Rational.

1. *Violent* ; when a Man is constrain'd to *do* That which
 his *Will* is *opposite*-to. Thus the *Israelites* to serve the
Egyptians, and to go into Captivity : So also *Paul*
 and other Saints are led captive to That they would not : Rom. 7.
 By this kind of Compulsion it is, that Satan is cast-out,
 (as is proved afore :) But, the *Will*, in Conversion,
 comes not under this kind of Constraint; Nor any thing
 like it.

2. There is a *Natural* Compulsion; Thus Men and
 other Creatures are Compelled to Eat, Drink, Sleep,
 and.

and breathe : There needs no violent hand to inforce it, nor (indeed) Arguments to perswade to it ; They do it by Intinct, which God hath endued them with, for their own Conservation: This is proper to the Soul Converted.

3. There is also a *Rational* Compulsion ; (which is nearest the Case in hand :) This is, when the Understanding and Judgment are *Convinced* of the Goodness, Necessity, or Expediency of a Thing ; which before he judged otherwise of. For this, see the *Prodigal's* Reasons for Returning to his Father ; and the *Lepers*, for going to the *Syrians* Camp : Their Reason told them, It was better to go where there was hope, than tarry where there was None. See also the Arguments for the Saints living to Christ ; *His Love constrains them* ; yet no breach of their liberty ; albeit , that Ere-while they were Otherwise minded.

The first of these, (viz. That which is *violent*) our Doctrine hath nothing to do with. It is true, There is a *Drawing* in Conversion ; and there would be no Conversion without it ; *No Man can come to Christ except he be Drawn* : Which *Drawing* implies, either an *Aversness*, or (at least) a *Disability*, in him that is *Drawn* ; and consequently, a kind of *force*, or *extrinsecal Power* put-forth upon him : But let me say, It is *such a Force*, as the enlightened Soul most gladly subjects it self unto ; and would not be from under the power and blessed Influence of it, for a World. Let it therefore be observ'd, *How* the Father draws ; It is, in the most Genuine and kindly way that can be conceiv'd ; He draws by *Teaching* : Not as *Gideon* taught the Men of *Succoth* ; Nor as the Task-Masters drew the people to their burdens : But, as *Jacob* was drawn into *Egypt* ; who need not be forced to dislodge and remove his Tent, when he found himself furrounded with famine, and heard there was corn in *Egypt* ; That the King had sent Wagons for him, and provisions for the way ; telling him withall, That the Good of all the land was before him : Especially considering, that his beloved *Joseph* was there alive, and in greatest honour, ready to Receive

Luke 15.17.
2 King.7.3,4.

Joh.6.44.

Joh.6.45.
Judg.8.16.
Exod.5.16.

Gen.45.

ceive him. In like manner, When the Soul hath a sight of the Holiness of God, and of its own Vileness; Of the Purity, Streightness, and just severity, of the law; With its own Uncleaness, Crookedness, Guiltiness, and Disability to bear the Vengeance of it: That, in God alone is all its blessedness: and that yet, it cannot possibly come at him, but as dry'd Stubble to a Devouring flame. And yet again, If he comes not, he dyes in the place where he is, and must dwell with everlasting burnings; And withall hears of a *Mediator* who casts out None that come to Him; and by whom he may come to God both safely and acceptably; There will need no violent hand on the Will; Even *love to himself will make the Soul Wings*.

There is, indeed, a violent (or rather, Almighty) Restraint and Casting-out of him that did usurp upon the Will, & pervert it, by deluding the understanding with false glosses and Carnal Reasonings; Which being dispelled by the true Light's shining, the Will falls in with it, and follows with perfect freedom. Christ offer'd no violence to the *Man*, when He cast-out the legion, but thereby restor'd him to his proper freedom; For, We presently find him *at Jesus feet Clothed and in his Right Minde*; Desiring *Now* to dwell with Him, the Sight of whom (before) was a torment to him. Luke 8. 35.

The Understanding (when the faculties are put in order by Renovation) is the spirit of the Will; which therefore looks and goes the same way, as of Course, (as the wheels did after the living-Creatures) without any foreign or violent Constraint: It hath *Now* a Spring within it, by which it is Moved and Guided (it self being also Renewed and sanctified) according to this Renewed Light: As a Needle, that is rightly touch'd, Needs not be forc'd to look towards the Pole; It will do it by Sympathy: *If the eye be single, the whole body is full of light*. Ezek. 1. 19. Math. 6. 22.

But, suppose the thing objected to be true; (Namely, That in Conversion, the Will suffereth violence;) It no way deserves to be Styled *Cruel* or *Tyranical* (as some (extreamly tender in Nature's Concerns) do presume to speak;) Nor (in-

(indeed) to be complained of, in the least; Since the tendency and issue thereof is an Infinite good. Was it not a Mercy to *Jeremy*, That the Word of the Lord was as fire in his bones, that he could not forbear speaking; rather than be confounded for holding his peace? How much better is it, To enter into life halt or maymed, than go into hell with a whole skin! I hope, there is none so much besides themselves as to judge otherwise of it; Or complain of their being compell'd to go to Heaven, tho' it were by a Whirlwind and Charet of fire. At first, (I grant) 'tis pure necessity drives to Christ; but Afterwards, His personal Excellency and Loveliness constrain to abide with Him; (A Sweet and Blessed Compulsion!) And now you would not leave Him agen, although the first necessity of your going to Him were quite at an end.

But still we say, (as before) That the Will is not violated, but changed: and that in a due and orderly way, by being made subject to an enlightened Understanding; Than which, there is nothing more pleasant and Natural to it.

Now, As touching Inferences upon this Doctrine, I reduce them to two sorts: 1 *Cautionary*, To prevent the Misusing so Great a truth: 2 *Directive*, to draw forth some of the spirits of it, into practice: And of these, Intermixedly and Briefly (though capable of much enlargement.)

In General; Take notice, That the scope and designe of the Doctrine, is not to foster Remissness in Duty; Nor to Countenance a stupid or carnal quiet: But, to set forth the Fullness Freeness and Prevalent efficacy of Divine Grace; With the Creatur's nothingness (as to any considerable Act) in this Matter. More particularly:

I.

I. Presume not your self Interested in the Promise of Eternal life, untill you find in your Self those necessary Evidential Qualifications of Faith and Regeneration: Or at least, a truly earnest and restless pursuit after them; I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.

Gen. 32.26.

II.

II. Let not the Means be despised, because of themselves not Sufficient to save: Where the Means are, the Lord ex-

expects that Men should use them ; and we read not of any Saved without, where they might be had.

III. Let no Man sit still in the wilfull or careless neglect of his duty ; pretending, That if Elected, he shall surely be Saved ; If not, all he can do will not help him : Such a disposition argues a great height of Pride, or Sullenness of spirit, and Enmity against God : Fly from it as from Hell ; It is truly that Death which Hell follows after. As on the contrary, ye can hardly have a more hopefull symptom of your State, than a serious attendance upon God in His way: And in seeking to know your Election, begin at the Right End ; Give all diligence to make your Calling sure ; and the certainty of your Election will fall in upon it.

III.

I V. Take notice (from the Import and Tenor of the Contrary Doctrine) what standing need and usefulness there is of those often repeated Cautions, To Try the spirits ; Search the Scriptures ; Take heed how you hear ; and Not to be led by fair shews in the flesh ; (which is, to be caught with chaff.) The more smooth and pleasing notions are to the carnal Ear, the more to be suspected, and thoroughly examined before they pass. Let the Drift of the Law and testimony determine the Question ; And that will tell you, Those Doctrines are not to be held guiltless, that cry-up that Excellent Creature *Man* ; with the Strength and capacity of natural Reason ; the sufficiency of Free-will-Grace ; (and truly I know not what ; For they are not after the pattern of wholsom words ;) Making These the great hinge whereon the Design (that glorious Design) of Grace in Election, The Mediation of Christ, and the Holy Ghost's operations, must all hang and Move ; yea be frustrated too, and come to nothing ; except the Reason of Man will dethrone it self, and submit to That which it reckons foolishness. Remember, that *Godliness is a Mystery* ; which it could not be said to be, if Reason could comprehend it. With all your care and circumspection therefore, avoyd & fly from that dangerous quicksand ; which the *Jews* sunk into and perished ; and how many, in our days, are in danger of it ! It hath slain its Thousands for others single Tens.

IV.

Rom. 9. 31. 32.

Gal. 3. 10.

Rom. 9. 31, 32.

If you think to have faith, or special Grace, upon your Improvement of that which is Common, you mistake your Mark; you build on a wrong foundation; and are yet under a Covenant of works: under which no Man was ever Saved, Nor shall be. This was the Case with those *who followed after the law of Righteousness, and did not attain to it*: What was it that hindered? *They sought it (as it were) by the works of the law*: And yet the Gentiles, *who sought it not, attain d it*. Where Note, by the way, That those who do *not at all*, seek after Righteousness and life, are in as likely a Way to speed, as those who seek it *unduly*; that is, by works of their own.

Jer. 17. 5, 6, 7.

In vain is Salvation looked-for from the hills of Natural freedom, Free-will-Grace, Humane Improvements, or what ever els is of highest esteem with Men: None in such danger of being broke-off, (that is, of losing *That* they profess and seem to have,) as Those who are *high-minded*, who stand on their terms, and will not yield without taking their *baggage* with them: It was the very same with those Carnal Jews, *We have Abraham to our father, Were never in bondage to any Man; And, Are We also blind?* If thy Carnal heart have been hankering that way, and now brought-off; Bless the Lord for it, Remember the danger thou hast escap'd, and come no more *There*: And bear in thy heart (as a frontlet between thine eyes) that good word recorded in *Jeremy*, which shews the danger of making *Flesh thine Arm*, and the blessedness of *Trusting onely in the LORD*.

Infer. V.

2 King. 2. 14.

Joh. 11. 43.

V. If the Divine power be so absolutely Necessary, Then be sure that you rest not on Means or Ministry, though the best; Use them as Means, but it'll have your eye toward that Power and Grace, which alone can make them effectual: *Elisha smote the Waters with Elijah's Cloak*; but it was the God of *Elijah* that *parted them hither and thither*, to make a way over: Men Rolled the stone from *Lazarus* his grave, but Christ was He who brought *Lazarus* forth. Our duty is to mind our duty, and to have our faith in God, as the principal part of it; For he it is, who is both the Maker

of our playster, and the layer of it on : Who also doth influence and Manage it for us, from first to last.

VI. If all that pertains to Salvation, be given in Right of Election ; Then let every Soul that seeks for Spiritual Gifts, and would be sure to speed, apply himself to *Electing love* ; and let all your thankfulness for all that you have or hope for, be referred to that love : For, *That* is the Rock out of which they are hewen ; the Fountain and spring from whence they proceed. See the *Bounty* and Nobleness of it ! Electing love not onely provides your *Home*, but sends you *Wagons* and *Provision* for the *Way* : Regard not *your Stuff* ; (what ever you have of *your own*, be it good, or be it bad ;) For, *the good of all the land is yours*. Make mention of nothing that's properly *Thine*, except the *Greatness of thy sins*, Psa. 25. 11. (as *David*) The power of Indwelling Corruption, (as *Paul*) Rom. 7. Thy Unability to Serve Him, (as *Joshua* and *Jeremy* :) that, Jer. 1. 6. without Faith thou canst not please God, Nor give Glory Rom. 4. 21. to Him : That without Holiness thou canst not shew forth His virtues, nor answer the End for which He hath Chosen thee : And (finally) that thou canst be Sanctified by *that* Will onely, which Wills thy Sanctification. Heb. 10. 9, 10.

When *Moses* would prevail for the Gracious presence of God with that People, what does he plead for it ? *Remember* (says he) *this Nation is Thy People* ; And *Wherein shall it be known, that I and Thy People have found Grace in Thy sight ? Is it not in this, That Thou goest with us ?* Here you see, he makes *God's presence with them*, an Evidence of His having *Chosen* them ; And from His *Choosing* them, he draws an Argument Why He should be *with* them. *Moses* durst not say, *They are a People that keep thy Commands ; They are persons of a very honest ingenuous disposition*, (as some speak ;) A *Traactable* sort of Men, *that have complied with Thee, and better Improved Thy Favors than their Neighbours have done* ; Therefore Own them, and Go with them : No, but Consider (I pray Thee) *that they are Thy People ; Thou hast Chosen them above all people ;* and therefore deal with them above the rate of Thy dealing with other Men.

Dan. 2. 30.

In like manner, Having received any special Favour from God; Sacrifice not to your better deservings: but as *Daniel*, (who, tho' a Man of great Wisdom, yet sayes he) *This secret is not Revealed to me for any Wisdom that I have more than any living.* Thus also, we find *David* deporting himself, when *Nathan* brought him that gracious message from God, how great things He would doe for him and for his House; what does *David* put it upon? *Thou Lord God knowest thy servant*: i. e. Thou knowest, that I have done nothing which might move Thee to this Munificent bounty: *But for thy Word's sake, and according to thine own heart, Thou hast done all these Great things*: This is the voice of the Man after God's own heart.

2 Sam. 7. 20, 21.

Agē, Suppose you have done any signal service for God; Retire into self-abasement, and Magnifie God that He was pleased to vouchsafe you that honour: Thus also did *David*; when setting his affection to the House of God, he had gathered that huge incredible Mass of Treasure for the building of it: He wonders not so much at his having gotten it, (tho' that might well be wondred at;) as that he had an heart so freely to Devote it to that Sacred use; *Who am I*, (sayes he) *and what is my People that we should be able to offer thus willingly! For, all things are of Thee.* He acknowledgeth their *Willingness* to offer, to be as much of God, as the *Offering* it self. And *Paul*, having laboured more abundantly than all the Apostles, puts from himself the honour of it; *Not I, but the Grace of God that was with Me.*

1 Chr. 29. 14.

1 Cor. 15. 10.

Three or four Things (in seeking for spiritual blessings) be sure to keep still in your mind.

Math. 9. 17.

1. That you must be Nothing in your self: *New Wine* is not for *old bottles*; The Bottles must first be *Undone*, and made-up *Anew*; Or els, *The Wine will be spilt, and the bottles perish.* All your imaginary Righteousness, Wisdom, Strength, &c. must be parted from you: And to part with them, is as necessary, as to leave your *Made-ground*, and build on the *firm Rock*.

2. That

2. That Spiritual Blessings are a *Gift*, and will not admit of any Plea which may *seem* to make them *Wages*. What the Scriptures hold-forth as a Motive with God, *That* you may plead, and that is His Name: And indeed Nothing els is pleadable at the Throne of Grace. Esteem not your self the better for what you may carry with you; Think not to be accepted because of your *present*: It is not your *Money*, nor your *double* money in your hand, that Isa. 55. 1. will fetch you Corn from *Above*, (tho it may from *Egypt*;) Silver and Gold, Works and Worthiness, are of no value Joh. 7. 37. at the Mint of Free-Grace: *There* it is, and *Thence* ye must have whatever may render you welcom at the Court of Heaven.

3. Be not over-solicitous how you shall speed; Nor think you shall fare the worse for coming in so *rather'd* and *pittiful* a Condition: Free Grace is Compassionate, Rich, Bountiful: you are not the less welcom because you bring Nothing: The *best qualification* is to finde your self *ill-qualified*, Empty, Hungry, Poor, Naked, Blinde, Miserable. Electing-love hath provided Enough, and *More*; Not bread and water onely, (though *these* are very welcom to an hungring and thirsty soul;) but *Wine* and *Milk*, *Wine on the lees*, *A feast of fat things*: Not *Aprons* made of *fig-leaves*, or *Coats of Beasts-skins*; but *Long Robes of Lin-* Rev. 19. 8. *nen*, *fine and white*: Not money made of Leather, or base Metall, (that would burthen One to carry a Month's provision of it;) But *Gold*; and of That the *finest*, and *tryed* Rev. 3. 18. *in the fire*; which hath nothing of Dross or Cankering Rust adhering to it. And if thou have but *little*, look on that *little* as an *Earnest* of *More*; *To him that hath shall be given*: Altho' thou be but *smoking flax*, *He will not quench* Is. 42. 3. *thee*.

4. Be sure you leave not Out your Mediatour, the Lord *Jesus Christ*: Electing love doth All in Him, and so must you: Ask all in His Name, and then say, *Lord, He is Worthy for whose sake Thou shouldst doe this*! And withall Take heed of *Patching*; Joyn not Law and Grace together, lest the Rend be made worse: The Righteousness wherein

wherein you must appear before God, is not made-up of divers sorts and peeces, partly His and partly your own: but a Seamlesse Vesture, wrought throughout of *one kinde of substance*, and by *One hand*: In *this* you may approach with boldness, and touch the top of the Golden Scepter.

Infer. VI.

VI. Having so Firm and Impregnable a Rock to found your faith upon, why should the Greatest of Difficulties, even the power of Innate Corruption, Discourage any Soul from Casting it self upon Electing love; As that which is perfectly Able, and the very design of it, is, To *Subdue* iniquity as well as to *pardon* it? It chose us not because we

Eph. i. 4.

were or would be Holy, but *That we might be so*; And to that End, Undertakes the *whole* of our Work for us; It is between us and Sin, as it was between *Israel* and the *Canaanites*: Untill the Lord began to Drive, they did not stirr; They were *Gyants*, too big for *Grass-hoppers* to deal with; Had iron Charets, and Cities walled up to Heaven; And yet, that Company of *Grass-hoppers* turn'd them out; And this, because the Lord who gave them that Land, was in the head of them; He went before them, and cut-out their way for them: Whiles He drove, they were driven; When He

Psal. 44. 2 & 3.

Exod. 23. 28.

ceased, the work stood still; Nay, His own People were Routed and put to the worse. And we shall find both *Moses* and *Joshua* still using Arguments fetch'd from the *Covenant* that God had made with them, by which alwayes they were Supported. Let us do likewise, Make Election our *All*; Our Bread, Water, Munition of Rocks, and what ever els we can suppose to Want: Here we are sure of Supply and Safety; It's a Tower that's *really* walled up to Heaven; A Never-to-be-emptied Cloud of *Mannah*; and a *Jacob's Well* that is Never dry: 'Tis deep indeed, and you have Nothing to draw-with; yet be not disheartned; Stay by it, and the Well it self will Rise-up to you, rather than you shall want.

Numb. 21. 17.

Infer. VII.

VII. Having done all you can, and in the midst of your Doing, *Walk humbly*, as living on Another's bounty: Assume not to your self, but ascribe the whole of your Salvation, and of all the Conducements thereto, to Electing Grace; and hang

hang-on that Root alone: Even Faith it self, as it is the Believers act, is not to be Rested in, Nor to share in this Glory; We may say of Faith, as he to *Felix*, *By thee we enjoy much quietness*: (but the honour thereof chiefly belong'd to *Cesar* who gave them that Governour :) Give unto Faith its due; *Accept alwaies and in all places, the benefits you have by it, with all thankfulness*: For, it does you many good Offices, and you cannot live without it; Onely in the Throne let Grace be above it; For, That's the Potentate which puts Faith in that Capacity, and maintains it there; And the truth is, True Faith is best contented with its proper place. To this End the Lord tells His People, It was not *their* Sword, nor *their* Bow; that drove out their Enemies: But, (say some) It was the Sword and Bow which God put into their hands, and which they Manfully employed? No, God will not have Men arrogate so much to themselves; but to acknowledge, *It is God that subdues our enemies under us*. The People with *Gideon* He reckons too many to give the *Midianites* into their hands, *Lest they should Vaunt themselves against Him*. Faith and other Graces are Mighty onely through God: As they are His *Workmanship*, so 'tis He onely can keep them *Going*, (as a Watch or other Engine cannot wind-up it self.) To frame a *Perpetual* Motion, no Man hath ever attain'd; No, not in trifling Matters. As thou hadst no hand in changing thy heart at first; So neither, of thy self, in carrying-on the work afterwards; All our Sufficiency is of God: Even all the Strivings of the Saints are according to the *Workings of God in them*. 'Tis true indeed, That a good Tree will bring-forth good fruit; but not without *Sun, Ayr, Dew*, and other Heavenly influences; For, if separate from these, the Tree it self will dye: So, without a continual Communication of virtue from Above, the New Creature can neither *Act* nor *live*. Depend therefore on that *Radical* Grace (i. e. On the God of all Grace;) for Preserving and Actuating the Grace He hath given you. Rest not in this, That you know God, but rather That you are known of God.

Acts 24.2, 3.

Psal. 60. 12.

Judges. 7. 2.

Gal. 2. 8.

Col. 1. 29.

Cant. 4. 16.

Gal. 4. 9.

1 Joh. 5. 21.

I shall close this head, as *John* the Apostle doth his first Epistle; where having asserted the Divinity of Christ, he presently subjoyns, *Little Children keep your selves from Idols* : So say we, of *Electing love* ; (which was (indeed) the Root and Cause of Christ Himself as a Mediatour ;) What-ever you lean-upon *besides* and *without respect to That*, you make an Idol of it.



OF Perseverance

OR

*The certain and effectual Progress
of Election.*

FOR the firmer support and comfort of Believers, notwithstanding the present weakness of their Faith; As also, to allure and bring-in Others, who are hankering about the door, or yet in the high-ways and hedges; It hath pleased the Holy and only Wife God, to indulge us with plain and positive assurance of the certain continuance and going-on, of *All* who have *once* believed and received the Grace of God in truth; Albeit, that many concern'd in this assurance, attain not to it.

That Faith and Holiness do inseparably follow Election, is shewn afore: Our business now is to shew, that Faith and Holiness are of an abiding nature, and shall never be lost: And this is *that* we call PERSEVERANCE. Which being the *Crown and Glory* of all the former Points; and that as secures to us the comforts arising thence; being also as much impugned as any of Those: the proof and confirmation thereof, is apparently necessary, and tending to profit: And I trust, it shall not onely appear, that the Doctrine is *True*; but also replete with Arguments promotive of Holiness; by which, the contrary opinion will best be contradicted:

E c

For,

For, so it is, in the Wisdom of God, that every Truth has *that* in it, as properly tends to its own defense and establishment.

It's the property of Men truly wise, to enterprise onely attainable things, and things worthy their wisdom; as also, so to frame and module the *means*, as not to miss their intent: Much more must it become, and be incumbent upon Him who is Wisdom it self, so to do: If, then, the Ultimate End of all things, be the Glory of God; and the second great End, the Salvation of His Chosen: It may well be concluded, that the properest means for attainment, are pitched upon; and those, such as will compass his End. Hence also, we may be satisfied, that all intermediate Occurrences. (However improper in their own nature, and *casual* to us,) were all fore-appointed of God, and that by a Decree most wise and fixed; and consequently, are and shall be so dispensed, as not to hinder, but help-on and bring-about, the thing principally design'd; which therefore shall not (*cannot*) mis-carry, nor be *finally* disturbed.

2 Cor. 2. 17.

However therefore, Men of corrupt minds may stumble at the Word, Change the Truth of God into a lye, and turn his Grace into lasciviousness; and some others, (not of design but) by mistake and unacquaintedness with the true state of the Question; may disapprove and object against it: Yet may not the Truth be discarded, nor its friends be shy to Own it; But strive the more industriously, by their Sobriety, Meekness, Holiness, and all good fruits, to make the World know; that *To the Pure all things are pure*; whiles to other Men (through the impurity of their own spirits) all things are defiled, and turned into sin: And in particular, that the Doctrine of God's unchangeable love to his Chosen, and their Endless abiding therein, is no way an inlett, or Encouragement to sin, or Remissness in Duty; but is, indeed, the powerfulest strengthner against Apostacy; and most effectual quickner to Gospel obedience.

As touching this Doctrine, the substance of what I intend, is reduced into this Proposition: *viz.*

That

*That all and every one of God's Elect, being once Prop.
Regenerate and Believing; are and shall invincibly
be carried on, to the perfect obtainment of
Blessedness and Glory.*

Towards the Evidencing of this Truth, 1. let us take in things of a lower consideration, than that of Eternaal Salvation; and see, how those persons (formerly instanced) being destined of God to eminent service in the World, were carried thorow, and that completely, to the end of their work; Notwithstanding the greatest difficulties and natural impossibilities, that stood in their way to impede it. By which will appear the *sure effect* of God's Purposes, even in the midst of all intervenient Obstructions; and will contribute (not a little) to illustrate the Truth in hand.

1. I begin with *Abraham's seed*: In *Gen. 12. 7.* The land of *Canaan* is given them by Promise: *Isaac*, in whom this Seed should be called, was not yet born; Nor yet, untill both his Parents were past age. To help this, the Lord brings back the Sun many degrees; makes it a new spring-time with them, and gives them *Isaac*. When *Isaac* was Married, his wife proves barren: After twenty years waiting, the Lord (in answer to prayer) gives her Conception. Now, two Children they had; the Elder of which, the Lord rejects; and the other, (to whom the Promise belong'd) in danger every day to be killed by his Brother; and so, the line of the Promise in danger of failing. *Jacob*, to save his life, flies to *Padan-Aram*; there *Laban* deals hardly with him; and when he made homewards, follows him with evil intent: But, the Lord in a dream takes him off. No sooner is he escap'd from him, but *Esau* comes against him with four hundred Men, full bent to revenge the old grudge: The Lord turns his heart in a moment, and melts him into brotherly affection; that instead of destroying *Jacob*, he proffers himself to be his Guard and Convoy. When *Sim'on* and *Levi* had so highly provoked the *Canaanites*, that it was a Thousand to One but they would come and cut off *Jacob's* family at once; the Lord

Gen. 13. 11.

chap. 25. 21.

verse 23.

chap. 27. 41.

chap. 28. 2.

chap. 31. 41.

v. 23. and 24.

chap. 32. 6.

chap. 33. 4.

v. 12.

chap. 34. 25.

chap. 35. 5.

ch.37. 28.with
chap.41.54.

Exod. 1.12.

causes a terrour to fall upon them, that they do not so much as look after them. When a seven years Famine was coming on the land ; (likely enough to eat up poor *Jacob* and his house) the Lord, by a strange Providence, sends an Harbinger to make provision for them in *Egypt*. When oppressed by the *Egyptians*, and all means used to destroy them, and that both with craft and cruelty ; the Lord so orders the Matter, that the more they were oppressed, the faster they grew ; and by an high hand brings them out at last.

In the Wilderness, they carry themselves as unworthily towards God, as ever People did ; doing all that in them lay to cut off the intail of that good land, by their unbelief, and dayly repeated Rebellions ; insomuch that the Lord threatens to dispossess them : But, for his Promise sake made with *Abraham*, withdraws his hand and spares them.

I might instance also, the great streights and dangers they were in at the *Red-Sea*, which the Lord divided for them ; Afterwards for want of water, which he brings them out of a Rock : Then for Bread, which also he gives them from Heaven : How they were denied passage by some, and way-laid by Others ; and yet carried on and delivered : and at last, how the Lord drove out those Gyants, whom they despaired of Overcoming ; and so gave them the land in possession, according to his promise hundreds of years afore : *There failed not ought of any good thing the Lord had promised : It all came to pass*, *Josh. 21. 45.*

Gen.37.7,9,
11.

v. 18.

v. 22.

v.24-
v.28.

2. *Joseph*: Little *Joseph* is one whom the Lord will honour ; which in several dreams he intimates to him : His brethren do therefore hate him ; and, to frustrate his dreams, (which signified their subjection to him) they conspire to kill him : And how shall *Joseph* escape ? They are ten to one against him, and he the least. *Reuben* (who being the eldest, was most concerned, in point of honour, to hinder *Joseph's* advancement ;) he shall relent at the very motion of making him away, and out of respect to his Father shall deliver him. Well, though they will not presently kill him, they'll cast him into a pit ; where, in all likelihood, he must perish : But, in the good providence of God, the *Ishmaelite* Merchants pass by

by in the very nick of time, ere any wild beast shall have found him, or his brethren determin'd worse against him : To them they sell him, and by them he is brought into *Egypt*, (far enough out of *Jacobs* inquiry) and sold to the Captain of *Pharaoh's* guard ; (a person likely enough to deal roughly with him. But, here the Lord ownes him ; and to bring him into favour makes all that he doth, to prosper : which his Master observing, puts the management of all his estate into *Joseph's* hands. Now there's fair hopes of his coming to honour : But, how soon is it dash'd ! *Joseph* being a goodly person, his lascivious Mistress tempts him to folly ; Which the fear of God keeping him from, the misreports him to his Master, charging her own wickedness upon him. Hereby *Potiphar's* favor is lost, and *Joseph* cast into Prison ; and dealt so hardly with, that *The Iron entred into his soul*. Now, all hopes of preferment are gon, and what will become of his dreams ? Yet still, the Councel of the Lord, that shall stand ; and this downfal of *Joseph*, shall prove another step to his rising : And to make way for it, two of *Pharaoh's* Servants shall fall under their Lord's displeasure, be put in prison, and committed to *Joseph's* keeping : Here they shall dream ; *Joseph* shall interpret, and the event shall answer it. Now the day begins agen to dawn upon *Joseph*, and by the chief Butlers restorment, some hopes of his enlargement : but this agen is soon overcast, for the Butler forgate him. Notwithstanding all which, the providences of God do still pursue his Decree, and cease not, till *Joseph* is Lord over *Egypt*, and his brethren bow down before him.

Gen. 37. 2, 3, 4.

v. 7.

v. 9.

v. 17.

v. 23.

Pl. 105. 18.

Gen. 40.

Gen. 41.

chap. 42. 6.

3. *David* : God promiseth *David* to give him the Kingdom, and anoints him to it. What, notwithstanding all possible interveniencies ? Yes, for the promise is absolute : Hath the Lord said it, and shall he not do it ? If therefore, *Saul* cast a Javelin at him (unsuspected,) to nail him to the Wall ; a sharpness of eye, and agility of body, shall be given him to discern and avoid it : If he determine evil against him, *Jonathan* shall advertise him of it. If he send Messengers to *Naioth* to apprehend him ; they shall forget their errand, and fall a prophesying : And if he send others, and others after them ; they

1 Sam. 16. 12.

1 Sam. 19. 20-

24.

they shall do likewise: yea, *Saul* himself shall turn prophet for a day and a night together, that *David* may have time to escape, If he be in a City that will betray him, and not a friend among them to advise him of it; the Lord Himself will be his intelligencer, and send him Out. If *Saul's* Army have encompass'd him, and no way left to escape; the *Philistines* shall invade the land, and tidings shall come in the very instant, and take him off. If *an host* do encamp against him, he'll not be afraid: Why so? The Lord had made an absolute promise, and therefore if no help on earth, *He shall send from Heaven and save me*: Yea, *David's* wavering, (at times) and the weakness of his Faith, shall not hinder it: and the Reason of all, we have in *1 Chron.* 17. 7. and 8. *The Lord took him to be Ruler over his People, and therefore he was with him where ever he went.*

4. *Josiah*: A Child shall be born to the house of *David*, *Josiah* by name; who shall offer the bones of *Jeroboam's* priests upon his Altar. If (therefore) *Athaliah* determine to destroy all the seed-Royal, *Joash* shall be stolen from among the rest, and reserved; and by him *David's* line shall be continued: *Hezekiah*, though sick unto death, he shall not dye; but be healed (as it were) by a miracle; and fifteen years added to his life, rather than *Manasseh*, who must be *Josiah's* Grand-father, shall be unborn.

5. *Paul*: *Paul* was a chosen Vessel, appointed to preach *Christ* to the Gentiles; and at last, to bear witness of Him at *Rome*: And this must be done, altho' Bonds, Imprisonments, and Death it self, do attend him in every place. If they lye in wait for him at *Damascus*, and watch the gates night and day, to kill him; he shall be let-down by the Wall in a basket, and so escape them: If all *Jerusalem* be in an uproar to kill him; the chief Captain shall come with an Army and rescue him, (tho' no friend to *Paul*, nor to his Cause:) If more than Forty Men have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink, till they have kill'd him; his kinsman shall hear of it, and by his means the chief Captain shall be his friend agen, and grant him a sufficient Convoy; and

and this attempt shall be an occasion of sending him to *Rome*, where his last testimony is to be given. If Jews and Gentiles make an assault together, to use him despitefully and to stone him; he shall be aware of it, and by fleeing save himself; (by which means also the Gospel shall be further spread.) But, suppose he be left in their hands; and they so far prevail, as to stone him, and drag him out of the City; then (sure) his work's at an end? No, All this shall not hinder; Death it self shall not separate *Paul* from his work. It is not his being *twice stoned*, nor his *thrice suffering Shipwreck*, Nor his *being in deaths often*, nor any thing else, that shall make void the purpose of God for his bearing witness of Christ at *Rome*; as is abundantly evident by the stories of him, and the event at last.

Other instances might be produced, to the same effect; But, by these we may take an estimate of the thing under proof; and rationally infer, that if the Lord be so exact and punctual, in performing his word touching these lesser things; carrying-on His work through such a preass of natural oppositions; much more will He be, in securing and bringing about the Eternal welfare of his Chosen: That as he dealt by His People of old; *He bear them upon Eagles wings*, (above the Reach of danger) and *kept them as the Apple of His eye*; (with all possible care and tenderness) *untill He had brought them to Himself*: So will He carry it towards His Elect; For, he values the World but little, save with respect to them

II. Now, for a more direct proof of the Doctrine: Though two or three Witnesses might suffice to establish it; yet, since the Scriptures do abound with Testimonies for it; (the Collection whereof may be useful to us, for helping our faith in times of obscurity and danger: as also, to fortifie against the assaults of such as teach final Apostacy) I am somewhat the larger in bringing them together; with some of those Genuine Deductions that flow from them.

In the Old Testament, are many Petitions and Resolves made by holy Men, which import the truth of this Doctrine; As, (namely) That *the Lord will perfect that which concerns them*: That *He will not forsake the work of His own hands*: That

He

Ps. 73. 24.

37. 41.

25. 1.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Tit. 1. 2.

v. 28.

John 4.

v. 14.

He will guide them by His Counsellors, and after receive them to Glory: And that, in the mean time, None of their steps shall slide; and this, because It is God that girds them with strength, and He will make their way perfect, Psalm 18. 32. (with many others, as also in *Paul's Epistles.*) In every of which is implied a Promise of the thing prayed for, or concluded upon: For, without such a Promise they could not have done it in faith; nor meetly have given them down as matter of instruction to Others. But, we know they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; Who knowing the deep things of God; What His Decrees were; and what was contained in the *Promise of Eternal life before the World*; drew out their hearts to Believe, and formed their prayers accordingly. But, besides these, we have many express promises and affirmations of it,

In the 10th. of *John*, Our Saviour sayes, *His sheep shall never perish*; which is, in effect, their faith shall never fail: For, safe they cannot be from perishing, without the securement of their Faith: And in *John 4.* (speaking of the Spirit of Holiness which Believers receive from Him) He saith expressly, *Whosoever drinketh thereof, shall never thirst: (i. e. It shall never be dried up) but shall be in him, a Well of Water springing up to Everlasting life.*

Prov. 10. 30, The Righteous shall never be removed, (i. e. They shall never fall back into their former state;) and the Reason is, Because the way of the Lord is strength to the upright; v. 29. Whether by [the way of the Lord] be meant, His way or manner of dealing with upright Persons, which is, to increase their strength; (according to Job 17. 9.) Or, of the Genuine property of God's wayes; which is, to afford that peace and satisfaction to those who walk in them, that they are daily more habituated and connaturalized to them, and estranged from all wayes else; they are both to the purpose in hand.

Prov. 24. 16, A just Man falleth seven times and riseth up again; He falls not so as to lye where he fell; He falleth not into mischief, as the wicked doth: yea, he rather gets ground by his fall, as v. 5, A Man of Wisdom increaseth strength; By the sense of his own weakness, he is led to strength everlasting; as was Paul, 2 Cor. 12. 10.

Pro-

Prov. 12. 21. There shall no evil happen to the Just: Then, not the greatest and worst of evils; which is, To depart from the living God: So, v. 3. The root of the Righteous shall not be Moved; His fruit may sometimes be Blighted, or blown off, and his branches to's'd with a tempest; but still, his Root is where it was; His life is hid, and free from all Commotion; and shall (therefore) renew both his fruit and branches; according to that in Jeremy, He that trusteth in the Lord shall not cease from yielding fruit. Jer. 17. 7, 8.

Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. This (say some) is the promise of affording them Means, but not of effecting the end; Therefore see Chap. 3. 19. *Thou shalt call Me my Father, and [shalt not] depart from Me:* And this, because He worketh Effectually in them that believe; As at first in causing them to believe, so now in maintaining and perfecting their Faith. 1 Thes. 2. 13.

Psalms 84. 11, The Lord withholdeth no good thing from them that walk uprightly: And if so, then continuing to walk uprightly, (being a good thing) shall not be withheld from them. Which deduction is also warranted from Job. 17. 9. The Righteous shall hold-on his way, and He that [bath] clean hands shall be stronger and stronger; as also from Prov. 4. 18. The path of the Just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more, unto the perfect day. And David further backs it in Psalm 26. 1. where from his present Faith, he concludes his future progress; I have trusted, I shall not slide; and this, because The Lord holdeth his soul in life, and suffereth not his feet to be moved. Psalm 66. 7.

Mark 16. 16. He that believeth shall be saved: And John 11. 26. Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me (says Christ) shall never dye: i. e. He that once has Faith shall never lose it: For, to say, He shall keep it, if he do not lose it, (as some would give the sense) had been a Comfortless and empty Notion, and an injudicious way of speaking. This is yet further confirmed by John 5. 24, He that believeth is passed from death to life, and [shall not] come into condemnation. The Reason of all which is, that their Faith is founded on a Rock; which Wind and Waves may beat Math. 7. 15.

Pſalm 125. 1.
Iſa. 33. 20.
Chap. 45. 17.
1 Pet. 2. 5.

and break themſelves againſt ; But never the Rock it ſelf, nor *That* which is built upon it: *He that truſteth in the Lord, is as Mount Zion, which [cannot] be moved: No, Not ſo much as One of the ſtaves of that Tabernacle ſhall be removed, and that for ever: They ſhall not be aſhamed nor confounded [World without End.]*

It would very much allay that ſuperlative cauſe of Rejoycing, [*That our Names are written in Heaven,*] if poſſibly they might be blotted out agen; ſince we find, in our ſelves ſuch a proneneſs to Revolt, (which every one acquainted with his own heart, muſt acknowledge :) But we are ſure, Chriſt would not propound to us a *failable* ground of rejoycing: For, that would have been an inviting us to lean on a breakable ſtaff: which kind of dependance, He is evermore calling us from.

Believers (indeed) are ſometimes ſoyl'd, but never overcome: Though they fall, (and that ſeven times in a day, as was ſaid) As often do they riſe agen: And it's no diſparagement to their leader, (yea, it is the Glory of a General) to give his enemy advantages, and take them agen at his pleaſure, to his enemies greater confuſion and overthrow. Satan got nothing by his Winnowing *Peter*; *Peter* loſt ſome of his Chaff, (which well might be ſpared) and the Tempter loſt many an after-advantage; For, the World of Believers have been the warier ever ſince.

To this ſecond ſort of evidence, I ſhall onely add *That* of the Holy Apoſtle, in *Rom. 8.* He was perſwaded (that is, He was thoroughly ſwayed in his faith, to believe it for himſelf, and deliver it down to the Ages to come, as a Truth infallible) That *neither Height nor Depth, Nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeparate from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* He reckons up all that can be named; and, leſt any thing might have ſlipt him, he brings in *Height and Depth*; as being thoſe two extreams that take in All, and more than Men can think: and then reſolves, That even *Theſe* ſhal not be able to do it. And ſurely, if the ſuper-celeſtial height of God's *Holineſs*, Nor the infra-infernal Depth of *ſin*, ſhall ſeparate from that day of Glory, (which the ſons of God were Predeſtinated to, and for which they were both

Rom. 8. 38, 39.

both made and Redeemed, called into and groan for ;) then are Believers *Roundly* secur'd against final Apostacy.

III. A third sort of evidence for Confirmation, are certain Arguments or Reasons why the Saints must needs Persevere in Faith and Holiness.

By this word [Needs must] I do not understand any other kind of necessity, than well consults with *perfect freedom*; such a Necessity as was upon *Paul* to preach the Gospel; which was a work he rejoyced in: such as was upon *Jesus Christ* to bring-home his sheep; and to lay down his life for them: How was He *strengthened* till it was accomplished! Luke 12.50. That it was written in his heart was no hindrance to the freedom of his will: The expression is well warranted also where it is said, That the Scripture (speaking of *Judas* his fact) *must needs* be fulfilled, *Acts* 1. 16.

The first Argument, in proof of Perseverance, is founded *Arg. I.* on the Saints *Extrait* or *Original*; *They are born of God*: *John* 1.13. And this hath the force of a double Argument.

I. As *God is their Father and Eternal Root*: Our Saviour holds forth this Relation, as the ground of our Faith in prayer, *Math.* 6. 9. And He begins with it Himself, when He prays for His own Glory, and that His Disciples might be partakers of it, *John* 17. 1. To the same end, He frequently useth that style of *Father*, in the Gospel of *John*; as in particular, That He ascends to *His Father*, and *our Father*, *John* 20. 17. It is to strengthen our Faith in God (thro' Himself) on the account of His *Fatherhood* to us. *The Father loveth the Son*, *John* 3. 35. And, *He loves His Believers*, as *He loveth Christ Himself*, *John* 17. 23. On which ground the Apostle concludes, That *He cannot but give us all things selfe*, *Rom.* 8. 32. Believers are, (in truth) the product of His love, both in respect of *Election* and *Regeneration*; and being so, He cannot but have a paternal affection for them; to administer to them, what-ever tends to their

John 13. 1.

Phil. 1. 6.

Isaiah 27. 3.
chap. 46. 3, 4

1 K. 19. 19, 20.

sustentation and growth ; and to keep-off what ever would intercept or weaken His gracious influences towards them : *Having once loved them, He loves them for ever.* They may therefore be confident, *That what He hath begun in the Spirit, He will not let end in the flesh : That having begun a good work in them, He will also perform it :* For, As they have their spiritual Being from Him, as the Father of it ; so 'tis Natural to Him to derive his virtues into them without intermission, as for a Vine to send up its sap into its own branches, or the Sun to cherish the plants of its own production. *All the natural affections that are in Creatures towards their own, are but drops of His Immense fullness :* A Mother may possibly forget the Child of her Womb ; but, the Lord cannot forget His Off-spring : *That none may hurt them, (nor they themselves) He will keep them night and day, and water them every moment. They are born by Him from the Belly, and carried from the Womb ; and even to their old age He will carry them and deliver them.*

2. The new Creature, as it comes from God ; so, it exists in Him, and lives upon Him ; and it is Natural to it, to seek its nourishment where it had its Original : Nothing can satisfy it, but that great Deep from whence it sprang ; As a New-born child (that has not the use of Reason) will hunt for the breast by natural instinct, and not be quiet without it : As soon as ever Paul was converted, *Behold he prayes, Acts 9. 11.* Having once received the Spirit of Christ, they cannot but incline after Him, (as *Elisha did Elijah* upon the casting of his Mantle on him :) It is natural to them, as for sparks to fly upwards : They are said To be *baptized with fire* ; Not onely, because of the purifying Nature of fire ; but in respect of its *Aspiring* quality ; it will be Mounting, and not rest till it come to its own element. Obstructions many it meets withall, but still it presseth onwards, and by degrees bears-down all afore it, and carries that with it in which it dwells, to the place of its birth ; As the Dove could not Rest, till she came to the Ark, whence she set-out : This is lively set forth by our Saviour in *John 7. 38. He that believeth in Me, out of his belly shall flow Rivers of living Waters.* [Rivers] that bear down all

all opposition : and Rivers of [*living*] Waters ; not Land-floods, which are but of short continuance ; or standing Pools, subject to drying up : But such Rivers as have an Immortal Head.

We see how *All things tend to their Center ; The wicked sleep not unless they do evil* ; They can bear the want of things most necessary to their being, rather than cease from sin : They are of the Serpents brood, and *the lusts of their Father they will do* : *Judas* was a Devil, and that carried him headlong to his own place. And if being born of the Devil, habituates men with so strong and restless a bent to Devilish lusts ; the Divine Nature must needs work as efficaciously towards God, and Godlike Actions. And if it were not so, the Divine Nature had never born an humane stock to Heaven : The first fruits of the Spirit possess them with an *earnest expectation and longing* for the harvest. Prov. 4.16.
John 8.44.
Acts 1.25.
Rom.8.23.

There are, indeed, Remainders of the Old Man, which will still be opposing the New ; and many contests there are between them : But Grace (like him that is Advocate for the King) will ever have the last word, and will also go out victor : ye may see it in *Jeremy* ; The word of the Lord was made a Reproach to him ; He therefore resolves to stifle it, and *will no more speak in His Name* : But, how succeeds this carnal resolution ? *The word of the Lord was in his heart, as fire shut up in his bones : He was weary of forbearing, He could not hold.* And *Jonah*, When he thought himself cut-off, and in the belly of hell ; (*yet* (saith he, yet) *will I look again towards thy holy Temple* : As the Needle that is rightly touch'd, never Rests but in pointing towards the Pole :) and *Ps. 42.7.* when obstructed in their Course, they cry the more earnestly, *Oh, when shall I come and appear before God !* Jer. 20.8,9.
Jonah 2.2,3.
Ps. 42.7.

II. Another Argument is taken from the Graces themselves which are the subject of Perseverance, viz. Faith and Holiness ; Which let us consider, first, as They are a Gift ; Then, in the Genuine use and property of them. Arg. II.

I. As they are a Gift ; They are of those, *good and perfect Gifts which come down from above, from the Father of lights,* with

James 1. 17.

with whom is no *Variableness*, nor *Shadow of Turning*. This Attribute of God's *Unchangeableness*, is fitly and significantly added, to shew, That as good and perfect gifts only, are from God, and from Him onely; so, That He never Changeth in His Purpose concerning those to whom He once gives them: They are of those Gifts that are *without Repentance*. As also, That these His Gifts do partake of His own *unvariableness*; They cannot dye, nor turn to be any other than what they are at first, save only in point of Perfection: There can happen no after-unworthiness in those He gives them to, which He did not foresee when He gave them; (which seems to be implied in the following words, [*Of His Own Will begate He us*:]) and so, no cause why He should with-draw them, which should not aswell have hindred His giving them at first. As the word of God is not *Yea* and *Nay*; so neither are His Gifts. They are also God's *Workmanship*; And we *know*, (saith *Solomon*) *That whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever; Nothing can be added to it, Nor anything taken from it.*

v. 18.

2 Cor. 1. 19.

Eccles. 3. 14.

2. Let *Faith* and *Holiness* be considered in the Genuine use and Property of them. Nothing so endangers the Soul, as self-fullness; *Faith* (therefore) was ordained to empty out self, and devolve the soul on Another, (*viz.* Christ) which the more it does, the safer it is; And having once done it, it never undoes it agen. *Faith* (also) is an Active Grace, and diligent; and therefore thriving: He that hath it, shall have *more* of it; (Then sure he shall not lose that he hath:) It is alwayes Travelling, and never tyred; 1. Because it travels in the strength of *Omnipotency*: and 2. Because it works by *love*; Which is the most kindly and efficacious Principle of service and great Acts. Love is an Endless skrew; It has truly attain'd the perpetual Motion; It *enables to endure all things and faileth not*, 1 Cor 13. 7, 8. All that God doth for His people is from love, *John* 3. 16. and all that they do for God, growes from the same Root; They *love Him*, [because] *He loved them, first*; 1 *John* 4. 19. Love is That which renders a Work both pleasant to the Agent, and acceptable to the Object of it. *Faith* (therefore) working by love, shall never be weary of its work, nor fail of

Luke 19. 26.

Math. 13. 10.

of its end; *It is of Faith, That it might be sure.*

Rom. 4.16.

And as for *Holiness*, (which is a disposition according to God, and capacitates for the blessed Vision) a little of it in Truth, is of infinite worth; The very smoak of it shall not be quenched: And it would be strange, if a thing so precious should be liable to *putrification*: But it is not; yea, it changeth other things, but is it self never changed: It is of a spreading nature; compared therefore to leaven, which is put into the Soul and hid there, till the whole lump be seasoned: It is of an *assimilating* property; there is an Heavenly *Tincture* in it, which sanctifies all that it toucheth; *To the pure all things are pure.* It also meetens for Converse with God; and it draws and ingageth the Soul to Him; There it is as in its proper *Element*, and out of which it cannot live: And, by this Converse it is both increased and sublimated.

A *Natural* Body once in being, can never be reduced to *Nothing*: How then should Things of *Divine* substance? They are *Born of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth for ever*: And as the seed is, such will be the fruit; The Older it grows, the firmer it is; *He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger*: They are the *Holy Seed*, And therefore, tho' they cast their leaves (at times) yet *their substance is in them*, By which they are still renewed.

To all which might be added, that Notion also in *Romans* 8. 30. which inferreth, That to be *sanctified*, is all one as to be *glorified*: Holiness is the seed of Glory; and holy persons are in Glory; (*viz.* as to its kind, and the certainty of their obtainment;) although (indeed) it hath no glory at present, in comparison of that which shall be; as the seed of a Rose or Lilly, compared with the flowers they will grow into; and which are virtually in them. According with this, is that of our Saviour, *He that believeth [hath] everlasting life*: It argues the certainty of their Perseverance; *The law of his God is in his heart: None of his steps shall slide*: And therefore he saith, *Destroy it Not, there is a blessing in it.*

John 3.36.

Pl. 37.31.

Ira. 65. 8.

III. Another proof rises from the *Nature, extent, and design* Arg. III.

design, of Providence; or from the Intent and Purpose of God, in that great variety of things which believers are exercised with in the world. There are three things considerable, to make out this Argument;

1. *That there is a Divine Providence which Governs the World*: As in dividing to the Nations their inheritance, and bounding their habitations, at first; so, by continuing them in possession, or Outing them, at his pleasure; and this (oftentimes) by very unlikely means, and over-ruling things accordingly: *Seir* being given to *Esau*, and *Ar* to the Children of *Lot*; and their term not being yet expired; the Lord inclines them to let *Israel* pass thorow, and to give them meat for their money: whereas the *Amorites*, who were destinied to destruction, *He hardens their spirits and makes them obstinate*; that they deny them passage, and come out against them in battel. So, when he would translate the Chaldean Monarchy to the Persians; He *enfeebles* the one, but *stirrs up* the Others spirits, and *Girds them with strength*. How oft doth the Scripture repeat, *That the Lord reigneth, That He puts down One and sets up another, That He doth according to His Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the earth?* How evident is it in his humbling of *Pharaoh*, *Nebushadnezzar*, and others! This Providence reacheth to all manner of Persons; times, and things; and Circumscribes them: It leaves not the least thing to a Contingency; Even Ravens, Sparrows, and Lillies, yea, and the hairs of your head are all numbred and under the Conduct of the Providence of God, *Matth. 6. 26.*

2. *That the design and course of God's Providence, is to accomplish His Purpose*. As Providence governs the World; so Purpose is the Director of Providence. He is a Provident Man that orders his affairs prudently: *i. e.* so that nothing is wanting, nor any thing spent in waste. Both these are in the Providence of God eminently: for 1. It is All-sufficient; supplies all needs; Gives all things pertaining to Means and End: 2. It does Nothing in vain, Nothing superfluous or impertinent to His Purpose. Things most casual

Deut. 2. 29, 30.

Jer. 51. 11.

Isa. 45. 1-5.

Eccl. 9. 1.

97. 1.

75. 7.

Dan. 4. 35.

Ezek. 24. 25.

fual to Men, are levelled at a set and Certain End: *What the Lord speaks with His Mouth, He fullfills with His Hand*, 1 Kings 8. 24. and His Act shall not vary a tittle from His Decree, which is clearly the meaning of that in the Acts, *Known unto God are all His Works from the beginning of the world*. Whence was it, that *Eſau* tarried so long at his hunting, that he was overfainted? That *Jacob* was making pottage just when *Eſau* comes home, which set his appetite on edge after it? But, *that the Purpose of God according to Election might stand*: The Elder must serve the younger; which now came-to-pass by the sale of his birthright. And thus the Providence of God makes even the prophaneſs of Men, ſubſerve to His End. The Lord had determined to caſt *Judah* and *Jerusalem* out of His ſight, for their obſtinacy: And to this end (that is, To make way for it) *it came-to-pass, that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon*: It was to fullfill the word of the Lord declared in the 2 Chron. 36. 21. (tho' that was farr from the Rebellers intent.) So He gave *Cyrus* all the Kingdoms of the Earth, that he might build His Temple at *Jerusalem*; and it was to fullfill His Purpose before recorded by *Jeremy* the Prophet; as ver. 22. & 23. In like manner, *Herod*, *Pilate*, and the *Jews*, they all conſpire the death of Chriſt, and each party on a ſeveral account; not thinking (in the leaſt,) to fulfil the determinate Counſell of God; yet, *That* was it, which *Providence* intended, in permitting the Thing to be done; as is plain, by Acts 2. 23. As alſo, the Soldiers, in parting His garments and piercing His ſide; It was their barbarous rudeneſs which put them upon it; But, *Providence* deſigned to make-good a Prophecy, *theſe things [therefore] the Soldiers did*, John. 19. 24. All that God doth in the World, is the Tranſcript, or Impreſſion, of His Decrees.

3. *That the Providence of God never fails of Its End: Our God is in Heaven, and doth whatſoever He will*. He will Ps. 115. 3. Work, and who ſhall let it? And what will He work? *The things that are coming and ſhall come: He hath both deviſed* Iſa. 44. 7. *and done it*, Jer. 51. 12. His Purpose is, To preſerve His

G g

People

Isa. 54. 17.

People, and therefore, *No Weapon that is formed against them shall prosper : Whosoever gathers together against them shall fall for their sake, Isa. 54. 15. And, As He hath purposed, so shall it stand ; Chap. 14. 24.* The Scriptures abound with instances to prove it. As on the Contrary, When the Lord will execute Judgment, it shall be performed, albeit the Means be never so weak and improbable ; *Tho' the Army of the Chaldeans were all wounded men, yet shall they burn Jerusalem with fire, Jer. 37. 10.* SHAMGAR shall kill six hundred Men with an Ox-goad ; and SAMPSON, a Thousand with the Jaw-bone of an Ass. These things considered and laid together, (though chiefly referring to Temporal things) doe strongly inforce the Argument, for things of spiritual Concernment : Inasmuch as things of Eternal Moment are worthy of more peculiar regard and security.

Judges 3. 31.
ch. 15. 15.

Now, All a Believer's exercises (which may seem to endanger him) are either from the guilt of sins committed ; From the power of indwelling corruption ; From Satan's temptations ; or Persecution from the World : None of which come on them *accidentally*, but as things *fore-appointed* of God, and for a good intent. It is for the *Elects sake that all things else have their being, 2 Cor. 4. 15. And are all caused to work together for their good, Rom. 8. 28.* As (namely) to humble them for sin ; To wean them from the World ; To indear JESUS CHRIST to them ; To shew them the usefulness of Ordinances ; To exercise and try their Graces ; To purge out their dross ; To enable them to succour others ; To demonstrate the Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness of God towards them ; To meeten them for Heaven ; And to make them groan and long to be clothed-upon with their house from thence ; As might plentifully be made out by the Scriptures, and the visible effects thereof upon those who have been exercised thereby. To instance a few particulars : *David*, after that great mis-carriage in the matter of *Uriah*, with his broken bones upon it ; walked the more humbly and warily all his dayes : He was also the more intent on that great duty of
Teaching

Teaching sinners the way of God. Peter, he also got ground by denying his Master; Thereby he came to see his own weakness, the need he had of Christ's support, and continuall prayer for him; and we hear no more of his carnal confidence, after that: But, What a clamour and out-cry does he make against our adversary the Devil! to warn others (by his own example) what danger they are in: And doubtless, what the Tempter got by Peter's fall, he lost the double of it by the after-watchfulness of Others; For that's the designed end, viz. To strengthen, stablish, settle them, ver. 10. Paul had a Messenger of Satan let loof upon him, to buffet him: The end of which was to humble him, and To shew him the sufficiency of the Grace of Christ. 'Tis likely also, That he got as much by that thorn in his flesh, as by his Rapture and Revelations: To be sure, they did well together, and poized him the better for his work. The like effect upon Job. Mary Magdalen the remembrance of the seven devils that once possessed her, and of that love which cast them out; How did it heighten her love to Christ, and keep her heart in a melting frame! She loved much, because much was forgiven her. The People's fourty years travel thro' that great and terrible wilderness, among fiery Serpents and scorpions; It was To prove them, and to doe them good in the latter end: They were also sent into captivity for their good: This was all the fruit intended, To take away their sin; and to make them partakers of His holiness.

Psal. 51.13.

1 Pet. 5.2.

Luke 22.32.

Job. 23. 10
with ch. 40. 4
& ch. 42. 6.

Deut. 8. 15, 16.

Jer. 24. 5.

Isa. 27. 9.

Heb. 12. 10.

I grant, (indeed) These things are Physick, which Nature desires not: Yet let me say, They are as needfull in their season as our food; and in very Faithfullness we must have them: which also appears by the scope of the new Covenant; (Of which more afterwards.)

Upon all which, It is safely inferred, That all these things worketh God with Man; Not to destroy him, but To bring-back his soul from the pit, Job 33. 29 & 30. They are all made to turn to their Salvation: They have alwaies triumphed over them, and been more than Conquerors, through Him that loved them.

Rom. 8. 37.

And if this be the fruit and Result of all that doth or can befall a Believer, whiles in this World: (and ther's no more of evil or danger when this is done) then welcom let them be, as another Demonstration of their *INVINCIBLE PERSEVERANCE*. *Who so is wise, and will observe these things; even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.*

Pl. 107. 43.

Arg. IV.

IV. A fourth Argument for the Saints Perseverance, is built on their Union with Christ; Which is of that Intimateness, that the Scripture sets it forth by terms of nearest Relation; as Foundation and Building, Vine and Branches, Father and Children, Husband and Spouse, Head and Members; Yea, They are *both* called (interchangeably) by the *same* Name; He is called *Jacob*, *Psal.* 24. 6. And they are called *Christ*, *1 Cor.* 12. 12. And (which is more, if more can be) He communicates to them *that* title which one would think Incommunicable, *viz. The Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer.* 23. 6. with chap. 33. 16. And this Union is such as can never be broken; It is no more possible, than for the Union which is between God and Christ to be dissolv'd: For, the same Oneness (for kinde) is between Christ and them, as between the Father and Christ; which is plain by that passage of His prayer in the *17 John*, ver. 21. *That they all may be One* (How one?) *as thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, That they may be One in Us.* They are so near to Him, that they are said to be *Of His flesh and of His bones*, *Eph.* 5. 30. as also, That they are *one Spirit*, *i.e.* He and They are Actuated by the same Spirit, as the head and members of the same Body are by One Soul. And this is the true reason why Believers cannot walk after the flesh, because *The Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus* (as their root) *rules in them*, *Rom.* 8. 2. They are *preserved* in Christ as *Noah* was in the Ark; or as branches in their own stock: For, this difference is still to be Noted, That Believers have not this life in themselves, as Christ hath; but they have it in him, which is *better* for them than if in their own keeping: For, being in Him as in a Root, It is natural to Him to Communicate, and

1 Cor. 6. 17.

Jude ver. 2.

and as natural to them (by virtue of the Divine Nature communicated to them) to Derive from Him : And so, *Because* (and whiles) *He lives, They shall live also : He that* Joh. 14. 19.
hath the Son, hath life : and they have it in a way of Right; 1 Joh. 5. 12.
as he that is possesit of the soil, has right to all that grows upon it. All that is Christ's is theirs; There is a happy Commutation of Interests; Their debts with the consequences thereof are devolv'd upon Him; and all that was His is imputed to them. And His care of them is such, that He will be able to say at the latter day, *Of All that Thou* Joh. 18. 9.
hast given Me I have lost nothing ; He will not leave an 17. 12.
hoof behind : The *signet* on his right hand (Men of thine- Jer. 22. 24.
ing outsides) may possibly be plucked thence ; but the *least joint of His finger* shall not. No man (who is *Compos mentis*) will suffer the *meanest* part of himself to Gangrene and perish, if it be in his power to help it : How then should our Lord Christ ? Who besides the naturall affection
He hath to those of His own Body, hath also received a Commandment from the Father, to keep them safe : and is Eph. 5. 25.
perfectly qualified, in all respects, to make it good. On this Joh. 6. 40.
account, as well as others, they are complete in Him. Believers are so One with Christ, That whatsoever he did, they are Col. 2. 10.
said to doe it with Him ; *Circumcised* with Him ; *Crucified* with Him ; *Buried* with Him ; *Rose* with Him ; *Ascended* with him ; And they *sit in Heaven* with him. It is no more possible
for Believers to miscarry finally, than for Christ Himself to be held under the power of the grave ; There is one law
for them both : It's a faithfull saying, *If we be dead with* 2 Tim. 2. 11.
Him, we shall also live with him ; if we suffer with him, we Rom. 8. 17.
shall be glorified together. As *Christ once raised, dyes no* Chap. 6. 9.
more ; so shall None of those raised with Him, return any more to corruption : For, He gave himself for his Church ; not onely to sanctifie and cleanse it for *once*, but *Once for All* ; and to present it without spot or wrinkle at the last day :
By that one offering, He perfected for ever them that are sanctified. These are those *sure mercies of David*, recorded in the 55th. of *Isaiah*, and explained in that 13th of the
Acts.

Joh. 18. 9.

17. 12.

Jer. 22. 24.

Eph. 5. 25.

Joh. 6. 40.

Col. 2. 10.

verf. 11.

Rom. 6. 6.

ver. 4 & 5.

Eph. 4. v. 8.

Chap. 2. 6.

Gal. 2. 20.

2 Tim. 2. 11.

Rom. 8. 17.

Chap. 6. 9.

Acts 13. 34.

Eph. 5. 25. 27.

Heb. 10. 14.

It is not for Nothing, that our blessed Lord and Saviour so often repeats that good word and promise touching Believers, in *John 6. v. 39, 40, 44, 54*; (which surely He did, as being greatly pleased with the thoughts of it) *I will raise him up at the last day*: and, *I will raise him up at the last day*,---q. d. I will be with him unto the end of the world, and see him safe in Heaven: And this may be said of it, (as by *Joseph to Pharaoh*) *The thing is doubled, because it is established of God, and He will bring it to pass.*

Gen. 41. 32.

Arg. V.

V. Another Argument for Believers invincible Perseverance, is, That all the Attributes of God doe stand engaged for it: *Virtue invincible* having undertaken it, Needs must it succeed.

Jer. 32. 7. with
ver. 36 to 41.

Isa. 40. 28.

1. *Power*: In *Jer. 32. 27*, God's Sovereign Power over all flesh is laid-down as the ground of their faith, touching their Return from Captivity, and His giving them a new heart; and for His so keeping them, that they *should not depart from Him any more*, as they had done. So, when He would strengthen His fainting People, He styles Himself, *The Everlasting God, The Lord, The Creator of the ends of the Earth, who fainteth not, Neither is weary*: And in *Ch. 62. 8*, His *Right hand*, and the *Arm of His strength*, are engaged by an *Oath*.

2 Cor. 9. 8.

Rom. 11. 23.

Col. 1. 11.

Eph. 6. 12.

In the 2 *Tim. 1. 12*, The Apostle argues the certainty of his salvation from the *Power* of God; (which he could not have done with any good Reason or Comfort, had not that Power been engaged for it): *I am not ashamed--For I know Whom I have believed; and that He is [able] to keep That I have committed to Him, against that day*: And he gives the like Counsel to others, where he points at the [*Power*] of God, to make all Grace abound in them: and in *Rom. 11*, The Calling of the Jews, and grafting them into Christ, is laid on the same Rock; *For, God is [able] to Graft them in again.*

In *Ephes. 6*, He tells them what kind of enemies they were to wrestle with; viz. *Principalities, and Powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places*: (A sort of Adversaries too potent for spirits housed in Clay :) But, to harness them

them fitly for the battel, he shews them a Power that is higher than those; and (indeed) as much above them, and more, than they above us: And with *This* he would have them to Invest themselves, *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of His might*: This is an Armour compleat; aptly term'd *The [whole] Armour of God*; and in this strong Tower Believers are safe. ver. 11.

So likewise in *Eph. 1.* To confirm them touching the hope of his Calling, he brings-in *The Mighty Power of God*, even *That Power by which He raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and set Him at His own Right hand, far above all Principalities and Power, and putting all things under His feet*: Wherein he sets forth Christ as a pattern of what God will doe for Believers; They shall be raised and set above all. And though they sometimes fall, (as *there is no Man that sinneth not*) Let it make them more Wary, but not discourage them: For, *They shall not be [utterly] cast down*; and this, because *The Lord upholdeth them with His hand. The Archers may shoot at them, and sorely grieve them; yet shall their Bowe abide in strength, and the Arms of their hands be made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob*. And well it is for us, That the Divine Power hath undertaken this difficult Work; and that the Scriptures do so clearly avouch it. For nothing less could be a Buttress sufficient to stay our Faith upon, touching our holding-out to the End: But, because, *He is strong in Power*, *Not one faileth*. 2 Chr. 6. 36. Pl. 37. 24. Gen. 49. 23, 24. Isa. 40. 26.

2. *Wisdom*: This is an ability to fit and direct Things to their proper End. In matters of lesser Concern, we find the Lord so laying His Work, that it cannot miscarry: If therefore it be His good pleasure to Ordain Men to Salvation, His *Wisdom* requires, that it be in such a way as is *sure to succeed*: and that all sorts of Impediments be so over-ruled, as not to interrupt, but be made subservient to His great End: Having counted His cost and paid it off, and also begun to build; it behoves His Wisdom to see that His work be done, and brought to perfection: And accordingly to provide Instruments *suited* to His Work; such

such as He knows *Will do*, and *Not Over-doe*, the thing intended : As the Husbandman sorts his grain to the Nature of the soil, and threshing instruments to the capacity of his grain ; he uses not a *wheel* where a *Rod* will serve : nor a *Rod* where a *Wheel* is needfull : so, *He stayeth His Rough winde in the day of the East-winde*. He doth not onely design the *End* of a *Man's* journey, but *every step* in it is of His *ordering* ; *The Lord preserveth His going-out, and his coming-in*. In Isa. 26. 7. The Lord is said, *To weigh the path of the Just* : which (surely) is meant, Not onely of His observing their works, and dispensing to them accordingly ; but, as preponderating What they are to doe, and what is requisite for their doing of it ; and so, apportioning their strength and assistance answerably : As at making the World, *He weighed the Mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance* ; that its parts might be of equal weight : Or, as one that's to Run in a Race, and must carry Weights about him ; it will be his wisdom to have them evenly poiz'd : So, the Lord sets one thing against another, in our souls Concernments. In Rom. 16, *Paul* brings-in this Wisdom of God, (as well as His Power) to help their Faith, touching their establishment : and the Apostle *Jude*, in the close of his Epistle, gives Glory to God, [*as the Only Wise God*] upon the account of *His keeping them from falling ; and presenting them faultless before the presence of His Glory*.

3. *Honour* : The concernment of God's *honour*, is also an important Argument for proof of this Doctrine : The Lord's manner of dealing with His People of old, and the Reason of it, is an Instance above Contradiction. The Promise of giving them *Canaan*, was not more Absolute than the Promise of Salvation to Believers ; Nor was it less clog'd with Conditions, Threatnings, and Cautions, (which were afterwards added :) But, the promise being once made *absolute*, [*To thy seed will I give this land*] the Lord held Himself obliged in honour, to make it good. How often did He seem to be pouring out His wrath to destroy them ? First in *Egypt*, Then in the Wilderness : (as
appears

appears by *Ezek.* 20. 8, 11, 21, 22, and 40 verses.) And what was it that kept it off? It was the Interest of God's Honour; This put Him upon finding out Wayes to deliver them; *I wrought* (sayes He) *for my Name's sake*: The Lord did (as it were) labour and work to suppress His righteous fury, incensed by their intolerable provocations: His Name and honour were concern'd, and that held His hands; He had once made an *absolute* Promise, which therefore *must* be made-good, tho' they made themselves never so unworthy of it. *Ezek. 20. 14.*

The like ye have in *Isaiah* 48, They had dealt very treacherously, (than which, Nothing is more provoking;) But, (sayes the Lord) *For my Names sake will I deferr mine anger, v. 9.* And *Agen, v. 11. For mine Own sake, even for mine Own sake, will I do it; For, how should My Name be polluted?* The Lord will over-look a Thousand transgressions, rather than expose His Name and honour to Reproach, as once it was by a temporary suspension: To Recover which, and that His Name might be sanctified, He will bring them home agen; yea, tho' it be in the eyes of Men, a Thing *impossible*; and they themselves doe think so likewise; For, *Our hope is lost, and we are cut off,* (say they) *Ezek. 37. 11. and Lam. 3. 18. My hope is perished from the Lord.* Whether at home, or abroad, they still caused His Name to be prophaned: And for this His Holy Name, He had pittty on them, *Ezek. 36. 26, 21.* For, if He should have cast them off for ever, It would have been said, Either That He did not foresee how unworthy a people they would be; Or, He was not able to keep them in their own Land; Or to bring them back agen: Or els, That He was Changeable in His Purposes, and not true to His word, &c. some reflexion or other they would cast upon Him, which He could not bear. All which, & much more of like kinde, is applicable to Believers, with respect to their Perseverance.

4. *Justice, or Righteousness*; There can hardly be found a firmer support, or more plenary consolation to Believers, than That the *Justice* of God is engaged to save them; For, *The Righteous Lord will doe no iniquity.* He would not

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Justify (No, Not) His very Elect, but in a way consistent with His Righteousness : For which cause, He set-forth Christ a Propitiation for sin. Surely then, having received the Attonement, He will not expose His Justice to censure, by leaving them, in any wise obnoxious to condemnation. Salvation (Now) is their *due* : His *Grace* hath made it so, By both giving, and accepting such a price for it as engageth Righteousness it self to save them : For, *Who shall condemn, since 'tis Christ that dy'd ?* It is as Righteous a thing with God, To give Rest to His People, as tribulation to those that trouble them : *Paul* therefore builds his expectation of the Crown, upon this Attribute as well as any other ; *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the [Righteous] Judge shall give me at that day.* Yea, this Righteousness of God secures to them, Their holding out, *To finish their Course, and to keep the Faith* ; as well as the Reward when their work is done. *God is not unrighteous to forget His [Peoples] labour of love* ; Much less [*Christ's*.] This gave the Apostle to be perswaded *better things of those he writes to, than to be subject to Falling-away* : The blood of the Everlasting Covenant is engaged to *make them perfect in every good work, to doe His will* : Yea, *They shall bring forth fruit in their old age* ; and this, *To declare that the Lord is Upright, and no [Unrighteousness] is in Him.*

5. The Faithfulness (or Truth) of God, is also concern'd in the final Perseverance of Believers : For, having drawn them from all Created bottoms, to a total Relyance on Himself ; He cannot but give them *That* they have trusted Him for : The Lord will not be to His people as that broken staff *Egypt* was to the Jews, to fail them at their greatest Need ; which is, when they are *lost, driven away, broken, and sick*, and (perhaps) have no mind to Return ; as *Ephraim*, who *went on frowardly* : *Then* is the fit time for the Faithfulness of God to discover it self, by seeking them out, Bringing them back, Binding them up, Healing and Comforting them. To heal their backslidings, as it shews the Freeness of God's love, so His *faithfulness*.

The Lord will not behold iniquity in Jacob: i. e. He will not take

take notice of it, so as to Recede from His Word: For, He could not but see their perverseness and Murmurings: for which He punished them severely; and sometimes made as if He would disherite them: but still He Remembred His Covenant, and that Restrained it, that He could not Cast them off: The Lord had blessed, and therefore Men should not Reverse it; Neither themselves, by their insufferable Contumacy; nor Balaam by his Inchantments. *The Lord loveth Judgement, (i. e. Truth and Faithfulness;) and therefore* Numb. 23. 20.
He forsaketh not His Saints, They are preserved for ever. Ps. 37. 28.
 The Saints are in league with God; *They have made a Co-* Ps. 50. 5.
venant with Him by Sacrifice: And it is a league of His own propounding, by which He hath obliged Himself to protect them. And, tho' Men may break their Compacts, the Holy One of Israel will not; *He is not Man that He* Numb. 23. 19.
should lie, nor the son of man that he should Repent. David Ps. 16. 1.
 having made God His Fortrefs, concludes from thence, that Ps. 31. 3, 4.
the Name of God was engaged to lead and guide him.

Those Corinthians were as lyable to temptations as other Men who fell by them: for they had strong Reminders of Corruption, (as appears by both the Epistles) and a subtil Adversary to observe and draw it out: Besides, They were highly gifted, and so thought themselves above the Rank of ordinary Christians; than which, nothing could more expose them to danger: But, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, they shall be kept; *The Faithfulness of God that secures them, and shall confirm them unto* 1 Cor. 18. 9.
the End: For, *God is faithful* (sayes he) *by whom ye were Called:* It is as if he had said, God would never have Called you into the Fellowship of his Son, if He had not resolved to keep you there. So agen, in Chap. 10. 13, he tells them, *God will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able:* And he brings it in as an Inference from the same Proposition of The Faithfulness of God. He likewise layes the stress of his confidence for the Thessalonians being preserved blameless unto the Coming of Christ, upon the same Attribute; *Faithful is He that calleth you, who* 1 Thes. 5. 23,
also will doe it: And when he wou'd move the Hebrews to 24.

Heb. 1. 23.

purpose, to hold fast the profession of their Faith without wavering, he uses the same Engine still; *Faithful is He that promised.*

1 Pet. 4. 19.

Peter, he also directs the Saints to *Commit their Souls unto God, in well-doing, as unto a [Faithful] Creatour.* Now, the Scripture alwaies propounds to us, such Attributes and Motives, as are proper to the matter in hand; and therefore, in styling God (here) a *[Faithful Creatour]* it's as much as to say, *He that hath wrought you for this self same thing, is God;* who is *Faithful* to His purpose, or first Intent of His Work; and will therefore perfect it, Notwithstanding the fiery tryal you are to pass under; you may therefore build upon it, and commit your selves to Him accordingly.

2 Cor. 5. 3.

1 Pet. 4. 12.

2 Tim. 2. 13.

Isa. 42. 3.

Ps. 89. 33.

Mal. 3. 6.

And how doth the Lord condescend to Men of Low degree, for the support of weak Believers! *If we believe not, (i. e. Tho' our faith be so weak and insensible to us, that we doubt the very being of it, yet) He abideth faithful: He will not quench the smoking flax, Nor suffer His Faithfulness to fail.* The Reason why the sons of *Jacob* are not consumed, is not from *their* Unchangeableness but *God's*.

Ps. 25. 20.

Prov. 20. 28.

6. *Mercy*: This Attribute also, freely contributes to the Saints Perseverance. *Mercy* (properly) respects Men in distress, to support and bring them out, not-having of their own to help themselves: This, none are so sensible of as Believers; and therefore, Them especially will *Mercy* provide for: *Hos. 14. 3, In thee the Fatherless findeth Mercy, Psal. 59. 14. The God of my Mercy shall preserve me. Mercy is the Name of God, and His Glory, Exod. 34. 7. Mercy is His Way, All the paths of the Lord are Mercy: and it is His pleasant Path, called therefore His Delight, Micah 7. 18. It pleaseth Him above any thing: yea, He takes pleasure in them that hope in His Mercy, Psal 147. 11. We may say (in a good sense) His Throne is upholden by Mercy. It is Mercy that makes Men to fear Him, Ps. 130. 4. The 136 Psalm throughout, is an Encomium of Mercy, as That which doth all for us: and this, because it endures*

dures for ever. In the 138 *Psalm*, the Prophet grounds his confidence touching his Perseverance, upon this Attribute expressly; viz. That God would *Perfect that which concerned him, because His Mercy* (which began the work) *endureth for ever.* The great Covenant is *Founded in Mercy*, and is therefore stiled *The sure Mercies of David, Isa. 55.* I shall not add, touching this Attribute; For, if all the *Rest* be on our side, (and you see They are) the *Mercy* of God must needs be for us, since 'tis *That* (indeed) which hath enlisted and brought-in all the *Rest*.

VI. The Saints Perseverance may also be Argued from *Arg. VI.* the *Ends* of their being, with the *Author* of those *Ends*: (This, the Scripture puts weight upon.) Their *Ends* are, To glorifie God, and to be glorified with Him: But, neither of these can be attained without Persevering: Not the first, For, nothing so dishonours God, as Apostacy: Not the latter, because such onely as endure to the End, shall be saved. They must (therefore) Persevere, Or those *Ends* will be frustrate; which will not stand with the *Author's* authority.

That *these* were the ends of their Being, is evident, *Isa. 43.21, This People have I formed for my self*; and *v.7. I created him for my Glory.* The Apostle also is very expresse for it, in *2 Cor. 5.* where, speaking of that Divine building in the Heavens, prepared for Believers; he tells us, *They were wrought for that self same thing.* The manner of expression is much to be remark'd: It is not barely said, This End, or this thing, we were made for: but (in effect) This very thing, and nothing els, (to be sure nothing less) was the very scope and end of our Creation, both old and new, even of all God's workmanship upon us. And, as evident it is, That God Himself is the *Author* of those *Ends*, and that *therefore* they cannot miscarry. Upon this ground the Lord would have his People to found an *Undauntable* confidence, (as well may be gather'd from His so frequent indigitating of it.) In *Isa. 43.* He thus fortifies them against the forest of evils; *Fear not, for [I] have Redeemed*

A Practical Discourse

Redeemed thee; [I] have called thee: and ver. 7. [I] have created him; [I] have formed him: yea [I] have made him: [I, even I the Lord] ver. 11. and Chap. 41. 10. Fear thou not, for [I] am with thee: [I] will strengthen thee, [I] will help thee, yea [I] will uphold thee: The emphasis lies in the person *active*. [I] i. e. I the Lord, (a note of infinite signification and security to Believers!) The Apostle also, in that 2 Cor. 5. That Believers might know themselves *invincibly* secur'd, he points us to God, as the Great Author of those important Ends, and Almighty Undertaker for their accomplishment; *He that wrought us for the self same thing, is [God]* It is as if he had said, It is impossible we should lose the thing we were wrought for, because, it is God that wrought us for it: It is not the designment of an Idol; that is, Of some *Ignorant, Rash, Fallible, or Mutable* Agent; such a One as may possibly be *surprised* by unlook'd-for accidents; *Circumvented* by a sublimer understanding; *Over-born* by a power above him; or *Recede* from his purpose, thro' levity and fickleness of his nature; &c. But it is [God] who is *wise in Heart and Mighty in strength*, Job 9. 4. It is He from whom all things that are, have their being, and are perfectly under His Rule and obedience: He had Eternity afore Him, to lay His Design *surely*; and accordingly *He declareth the End from the beginning, and changeth not*. It is therefore as impossible for Him either to *Doe*, or *neglect* to doe, or *suffer* to be done, any thing whereby His purpose might suffer disappointment; as it is impossible *That God should lye*. He would never have set-up those Ends as the Sum and Upshot of His great Design, if He had not Determined to see them made-good. And therefore (as sayes the Apostle) *We are always confident, That when absent from the Body, we shall be present with the Lord*, ver. 6 & 8.

This is also further confirm'd by that compendious Promise, Jer. 31. 33. *I will be their God, and they shall be my People*: Every word (here) hath a peculiar emphasis; 1. That He will be a [God] to them: 2. [Their] God: and 3. [for ever]: This [I will] imports both a fix'd Resolution

solucion, & Time without limit. It is as if He had said, Though other lords *have had* the Rule over you, and you have *still* a Proneness to Revolt to them; It shall not be: I will not be Outed any more; I'll heal your backslidings, and be your God still: I'll carry it towards you and for you, as becomes a God to doe: and I will make you *such a People*, as cometh God to own; *I will not be ashamed to be called your God, Heb. 11. 16.* It would (indeed) be both a disparagement and dissatisfaction to God, if His People should fail of that He made them for; which (certainly) cannot be, because God is theirs; and if God be theirs, all things are theirs, both this World and that to come; 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.

Lastly, For the final Perseverance of Believers, a Principal Argument is fetch'd from the *Sovereign Decree of Election*. I call it *Sovereign*, partly Because it is the highest Manifestation of God's absolute Dominion over His Creatures, in Choosing whom He would, and passing-by the Rest: Partly also, because all sorts of things whatsoever are subjected to it, and made subservient to its final accomplishment. And this I take, for a principal Reason why Election is so frequently placed in Eternity, (or, before the Foundation of the World) *viz.* To shew, That the very Fabrick of the World, and all Occurrences therein, were so contrived and framed in God's Decree, as having Election for their primary scope and End: That this *first* Cause is the *Supream* Moderator of *all intermediate* Causes, and is itself subject to *None*.

It was not any loveliness in Elect persons, which moved God to love them at first; so neither shall their unlovely backslidings deprive them of it, (though it may be eclips'd, by their own default, to the breaking of their bones.) The Lord Chose them for that blessed Image of His Own which He would afterwards imprint upon them, and *this* He still prosecutes through all dispensations.

That Elect Nation the *Jews*, They apostatized from God, and did worse than any Other; yet, the Lord would not utterly cast them off. In *Samuel's* time their wickedness

was

Ezek. 16. 62,
63.

was very great; yet, saith he, (to stay them from total apostacy;) *The Lord will not forsake you*: But, what is the ground of that his great confidence, and grand Warranty? The very same that now we are upon; *The Lord will not forsake you, because, [It hath pleased the Lord to make you His People:]* Not because they remembered their duty and returned to God; but because *He remembered for them His Covenant*: In pursuance whereof, He long maintained their title, Notwithstanding their often-repeated forfeitures; and when in Captivity, brought them home again. And indeed, Nothing so melts the hearts of Those in Covenant with God, as that *the Lord should be pacified towards them after all their abominations.*

Ezek. 36. 11.

The manner of God's dealings with this people, is especially Instructive, to help the faith of the spiritual Election, upon all occasions; as holding-forth the special Regard the Lord hath for them, because of His *Covenant*: That tho' He may, and will, punish their iniquities, yet His loving kindness He will not take from them. And He puts it still upon His having once Chosen them, as you have it in *Jeremy, ch. 41. 9, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.* This later Clause, [*And not cast thee away*] seems added to shew, That His *Choosing* them was an Act *unrepealable*: q. d. I knew aforehand What thou wouldst Doe, and how thou wouldst prove: and, if I had meant *Ever* to Cast thee off; yea, if I had not Resolved against it; I would not have Chosen thee at all; But, since I have, Be sure I'll stand by thee, *I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will uphold thee with the Right hand of my righteousness.*

Rom. 11. 7.

Rom. 11. 24.

It is true, The body of that Nation, for their unbelief, are now broken off: (There is a suspension of the outward part of the Covenant:) Not, that God intends an Utter Rejection of them; For, such as have part in the *special* Election, are alwaies saved: And the time will come, when *All Israel* shall be saved: For, as touching the *Election*, They are beloved still, tho' yet unborn. For their sakes it was, That *the dayes of tribulation were shortened,*

shortened, Matth. 24. 22. Which answers to Isa. 65. 8. *Destroy it not, there is a blessing in it.* --- The Lord will not so much respect What they have deserved, as what His own Covenant is, concerning Abraham's Seed: Which Minding of His Covenant, is from the *Unchangeableness* of His Purpose; And therefore he saith; *They shall be grafted in again.* Rom. 11. 24. Yea, though they be driven into all lands, Scattered into Corners, Mingled with the Heathen, and become so like them as Not to be known asunder; yet, being His *Chosen* Ones, and within His Covenant, He will *bring them out of their holes, and Gather them* [One by One:] i. e. He will do it Isa. 27. 12. *accurately, exactly, punctually*, So as none shall be Wanting: Though Sifted among all Nations, Not [One] Grain shall Amos 9. 9. *fall to the Earth.*

The *Reservation* mentioned in Rom. 11. is God's Omnipotent Safe-guarding His *Elect*, when the *Generality* of the Nation fell to Idolatry; They would have gon *All*, as well as *Some*, had not *Election* held them back; as appears by 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12, 13. comparing the 4 and 5 verses. It is therefore said to be, [According] to the *Election of Grace*: Which intimates, That Election was the *Patern* or *Original*, and Reservation the *Copy* of it. And, That this was not a single Case, or Restrained to the time that *then* was, is evident from Math. 24, Where our Saviour foretells, That the Subtily of Deceivers, and temptations of the time, should be such; and the Torrent rise to that height and strength; That it will be a thing next to *Impossible*, Not to be Carried away by it: But, for the *Elect*, They are safeguarded from it: How? By the coming-in of the *First* and *Sovereign* Cause; By the virtue of which, the force and influence of all those second Causes, shall either be prevented, or Removed, Mitigated, Inverted, shortened, or Over-ruled; and the faith of his Ezek. 9. 6. Sealed Ones so Confirmed, that they shall not be hurt by Rev. 7. 3. them: Yea, (and which is more) Those very things which are *destructive* to Others shall *work life* in Them. This turn'd Deut. 23. 5. Balaam's curse into a *blessing* to Israel; and Paul's afflictions Phil. 1. 19. to his *salvation*: They are to Them, a *Cause of lifting up the head*. Luke 21. 28. And if it were not so, the Apostle would never exhort

Jam. 1. 2.

1 Sam 2. 9.

Iſa. 63. 8.

us To count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations : In the midſt whereof, *He keepeth the feet of His Saints.* For, ſurely (ſayes God) *They are my People, Children that will not lye* : i. e. They are of Thoſe I have Chofen and ſet apart for my ſelf; and therefore, they ſhall not fruitrate my Purpoſe in Chooſing them; which ſeems implied in that word [So] *So He was their Saviour* : q. d. I will Save them, becauſe I have made them my People.

Dan. 2. 44.

And for further confirmation, take Notice, That this Sovereign Decree is *alwaies* Regnant; *It is that Kingdom which Ruleth over all, and ſhall never be broken.* Pſal. 89. 34. *My Covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gon out of my lips* : and v. 18. *My Covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him.* It is meant of the Covenant made with David and his houſe; Or (rather) with Chriſt and His Spiritual Seed, Of whom David was a Type. And that we might have ſtrong Conſolation, the Lord binds it with an Oath, *Once* (i. e. Once for all, and Once for ever; it was ſo full and perfect, that it needed no Alteration, Amendment, or Repetition) *Once have I ſworn by my Holineſs, That I will not lye unto David*; v. 35. And how Impoſſible it was, That this Covenant ſhould be over-ruled or broken, appears alſo in Jer. 33. 20, 21. where, ſpeaking in the Name of God, he delivers it thus; *If you can break my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, that there ſhould not be Day and Night in their Season; Then may alſo my Covenant be broken with David my Servant*: (Here note by the way, That Day and Night take their turns, but ſtill it is in their Season.) And David himſelf ſayes of it, That it is a *Covenant Everlaſting; Ordered in all things and ſure* : i. e. What ever might poſſibly fall in to Interrupt it, There was that Order obſerved in the compoſition of the Covenant, & ſuch a Power layd up within it, as ſhould certainly over-run and bear-down thoſe Impediments, triumph over them all, and hold on its way; (As all the Tempeſts and tumults that may happen in this lower World, can in no wiſe Obſtruct the courſe of ſuperiour Orbs:) He therefore declares, (in high, yet humble, expreſſions) He deſired no other or better.

2 Sam. 23. 5.

ter security for his Salvation. And it is not unlikely, That David and Solomon were both of them left to those great backslidings, to give a proof of the *Sureness* of this Covenant; which indeed was sufficiently done by them, and tried to the utmost: For, they both broke the Covenant, on their part; & yet the Covenant was not Null'd: No thanks to *them*, but to that *Sovereign Grace* that had laid-in Provision afore to prevent it, by making it *Absolute* and *Unrepealable*. Yet the Lord will not Connive at their miscarriages; but *If his Children forsake my law and break my Statutes, I will visit their transgressions with the Rod; Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him; Nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail.* It must be granted, There was, at times, a seeming to *make-void* this Covenant; and great complaints are made upon it: But it revives again, and joy comes in the Morning, as is evident by the Close of that 89 Psalm, *Blessed be the Lord for evermore, Amen and Amen.* Its return was the more welcom for its temporary absence; and therefore he meets it with a double Gratulation, *Amen and Amen!* It was but in a *little* wrath, that He hid His face from them, and *that* but for a *Moment* too; but with *everlasting kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. The Mountains shall depart and the hills be removed:--But my kindness shall not depart from thee, Neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath Mercy on thee.*

Ps. 89. 31, 32.

ver. 29.

Isa. 54. 8.

ver. 10.

In Jer. 31. 37. another Impossibility is instanced in, to shew the *Eternal Validity* of this Covenant; *Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the Earth searched out beneath; I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord. The Lord Himself (you see) is both the Alpha and Omega of this great sentence; To shew, That both ends of the Covenant are in His own hands.*

By these Scriptures (with many others) it is apparent, that there shall be no Faileur on God's part: and if so, Then there shall be None at all; because He hath taken on Himself the performance of the *whole*. Believers (there-

fore) shall invincibly be carried-on (Notwithstanding all kind of impediments) unto the *End* of their Faith, the Salvation of their Souls.

Yet doth not this Doctrine go free of Contradiction: And truly, considering how cleer and pertinent the Scripture is for it; It seems to me, That if the first Impugners of Perseverance had not found themselves in a Toyl; and so, Necessitated to oppose it, for the maintenance of other principles they had before taken up and espoused, and which would not consist with this; They would never have set themselves against it: But, Errors (like Truths, in that) doe hang on a string; Or, as links in a Chayn, The first Mover draws the rest after. But I trust, thro' help from Above, all the objections, that are laid *against* this Doctrine, shall prove a further *confirmation* of it, by one hand or other: The chief that I have met with, are these that follow.

The Doctrine of Absolute Perseverance deprives Men of the sharpest bit which God hath given them to Curb the unregenerate part of the Soul: We mean the fear and dread of Eternal fire?

The Law is good, if a Man use it lawfully: So is Fear in its time and place; Out of which, it is as a Bone out of joint. The Law works by Fear, as a School-Master unto Christ; It is ordinarily the first occasion of our motion towards believing: The heir whilst a Child, may be under the tutorage of fear; But, when Faith is grown-up, then cast-out the Bondwoman and her Son; Fear shall not be heir with Faith: For, tho' it be a good servant, 'tis an ill Master. For Fear to predominate Faith, is, for *servants to ride, whiles Princes walk on the Earth*; which is an *Error the Earth cannot bear*. Believers (who know themselves so to be) *receive not the spirit of bondage agen to fear*: They are acted *Now* by another principle: (as a horse that is throughly broke and well-wayed, is better Managed by a gentle hand, than a biting Curb:) *Faith works by love*. It is not (henceforth) the *fear* of wrath, but the sense of Christ's love in *delivering* from wrath, that both *Curbs* the unreg-

unregenerate part, and carries to higher acts of obedience than *fear* is capable of; Altho' at times, all sorts of Motives may be needful to keep them going: And the Lord, ^{2 Cor. 5. 14.} for exercise of their Graces and other holy ends, may let the dearest of His Children long conflict with their Fears; Under which He yet supports them, and brings them forth like Gold, at last. (See *Ethan's* complaint, and the Close he makes, in the 89 Psam. See also, that excellent Treatise, *A Child of light*, &c.)

But; as touching this *Fear*, in the sense objected, (which supposeth it the best Curb to Sin, and promoter of Perseverance,) it ought to be rejected. How far it may influence a Man that is wholly Unregenerate, as a Curb to His lusts, is not the Question here; But, if *Saul* and *Judas* ran headlong to hell with this bit in their mouths; then is not this *sharpest bit* the most *Effectual Curb*. That which *weakens*, and tends (indeed) to *destroy* the *Root* of Sin, must needs be more effectual, (as to the main end) than *That* which onely *Restrains* some *puttings-of-it-forth*. But God ^{Acts. 15. 9.} *purifies the heart by Faith*: And, ^{1 Joh. 3. 3.} *Every one that hath this hope, purifieth himself as He is pure*: There is no such virtue given to *Fear*: but, on the Contrary, The spirit of *Fear* is put in opposition to the *Spirit of Power, of Faith, and of a sound mind*. But, what ever influence *this fear* ^{2 Tim. 1. 7.} may have upon persons unregenerate; they are not deprived of it by the Doctrine of Perseverance; for This concerns onely Believers.

The Objection lyes further open to divers Exceptions; As,

1. Because it puts an indignity on the Wisdom and Grace of God, as if He had taken from Believers, some expedient help to Perseverance, by his giving them *Absolute Promises*: (whereas, we should rather suspect our own understandings and Renounce those opinions which Necessitate such unnatural Inferences, to support them:) For, do but separate the Promises from their *Absoluteness*, and their strength is gon; They would prove as the law; *Weak, through the weakness of the flesh*. ^{Rom. 8. 2.} The Lord knowes, that Believers have both the difficultest work, and deepest sense of their own

Joh. 1. 5.

ver. 6.

own insufficiency ; and that nothing more weakens their hands, than doubtings and fears : And for this cause, hath made His Promises *absolute*. Thus, we find, He Armed *Joshua* to the battel ; *There shall not any Man be able to stand before thee, all the dayes of thy life: I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee* : And hence he draws him an Argument, to be *strong and of a Good Courage*.

In like manner, *Samuel* ; when the People were greatly perplexed because of God's displeasure against them ; To confirm them in their duty, he Comforts them against their *Fears* : *Fear not* (sayes he) *ye have done all this wickedness; yet Turn not aside from following the Lord* : (And what's the strong Reason by which he fixes them ?) *For, the Lord [will not] forsake His People* : (The Objectors and *Samuel* were not both of a Mind.)

Rom. 6. 12.

ver. 14.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

1 Joh. 5. 13.

Paul, (likewise) Exhorting Believers to that great duty of keeping-down Sin, that it might not Reign ; Because the sharpness and heat of the Conflict, might otherwise make them Recoyl ; He gives them (as an high Cordial) *Assurance of Victory* : tells them, in plain and expref terms That *Sin [shall not] have Dominion over them* : (Here they are at variance with *Paul* :) Nor do they better Accord with *Peter* and *John* ; The One directs us, *To give all diligence to make our Calling and Election [sure]* : And this, as a principal means to *keep us from falling* : And the Other makes it the Scope and End of his whole Epistle, *That Believers may [know] they have Eternal life* ; and *that they might [go on] in Believing*. Which kind of Arguments had been very unduly applyed, if Giving them *assurance* touching the *Event*, had not been a strengthening of them in their Duty ; and much more, if it would have proved an Indulgence to the Unregenerate part.

2. Let *Fear* be considered in its Ordinary and natural effects ; and 'twill easily appear, That Nothing is less pleasing to God, or more unapt for the Service of Perseverance. As a Man's *principle* is, such will be his *obedience* ; Slavish observance is the best that slavish fear can produce ; which is no way acceptable to an Ingenuous Spirit ; God loves

loves a *Cheerfull Giver*, not Samaritan-Worship, for *fear of Lyons*. Such service will also be *weak and wavering*; for, Nothing so unsettles the Mind as *Fear*: It enervates the Soul and takes away its Strength: *Nabal's heart dyed* 1 Sam. 25. 37 *within him for fear of David*: and the Soldiers who kept the Sepulchre, were as *dead Men for fear*: The obedience therefore which comes from thence, can be but a *dead obedience*. The Effect cannot rise higher than the Cause. Pharaoh let Israel go because of the plagues; which being a little removed, he Repents his obedience, and chides himself for it: And those hypocrites, though *Fearfulness* surprized them, Remained hypocrites still. This Fear (also) will consist with the greatest impieties; Those very Samaritans who *thus feared the Lord, did also worship their graven Images*. 2 King. 17. 41.

3. *Fear* puts upon using unlawful Means: *Isaac*, to deny his wife; *David*, to feign himself mad: *Peter* and other holy Men, to dissemble. It sends men to *Egypt* for help, as it did the Jews; yea, to hell, as it did *Saul*. Therefore, both Satan and wicked Men, are still endeavouring to put God's people in *fear*; as they would *Nehemiah*, whereby his work had ceased. And Satan stood at *Joshua's* right hand to resist him; that is, to accuse him, and so to put him in fear, because of his *filthy garments*; Thereby to discourage him in the work of his office. Gen. 26. 7. 1 Sam. 21. 13. Gal. 2. 12, 13. Hof. 7. 11. 1 Sam. 28. 7. Neh. 6. 14, 19. Zach. 2. 2.

4. Let *Fear* be compar'd with its Contrary, viz. *Faith*: This removes the Mountain, whiles *fear* fixes it; yea, makes it to be, where (indeed) is no such thing. *Fear* made the unbelieving spies to bring up an evil Report of the good land, and to fancy impossibilities of obtaining it: *Faith* made *Caleb* and *Joshua* Magnanimous, *Let us go up at once* (say they) *and possess it*; *For we are well able to overcome it*; yea, *they shall be bread for us*. These two, who feared no Miscarriage under an absolute Promise, were Carried-in; All that *doubted*, were shut out. *Peter*, whiles confident, walked on the Waves; when he began to doubt, he began to sink. It was *Faith* made those Worthies *valiant* in fight; Enabled One to chase a thousand, when *Fear* cau-

fed

1 Sam. 14. 13. fed a thousand to flee at the rebuke of One; yea, at the shaking of a leaf.

An *handful* of obedience springing from *Faith* and confidence in God, is more acceptable to Him than *sheafs* and *loads* arising from *Fear* of wrath. If *Paul* (for fear of hell) had given his body to be burned, it had been *Nothing*: But, *Faith* and *love* render small things of value with God; (the Widow's Mite, and a Cup of cold water.) And 'tis worthy of Remarque, That when the fruits of the Spirit are reckoned up, this *Fear* is not so much as named among them: And certain it is, That the more lively and sensible our love is to God, the less will be our fear of hell; For, *perfect love casts out fear*.

1 Joh. 4. 18.

5. If *Fear* were such an Effectual Curb to sin, or help to Perseverance, There would not be so many Promises of Delivering God's people from their *fears*: Nor could they so Affectionately bless God for their being delivered: Nor so Resolutely set themselves against it: Neither would there be so many Commands and Injunctions laid upon them, *Not to be Afraid*.

1. Commands and Injunctions against Fear: *Jer.* 46. 27, *Fear not thou, O my servant Jacob,--for I will save thee*: and again, *ver.* 28, *Fear thou not,--I will correct thee in measure*: i. e. *Meetly*, and *proportionably*, according to the scope of my Covenant, which is to *save thee*. The Lord would not have His People to think themselves in danger of being *Cashier'd*, when they are *Chastened*; which seems the Import of that in *Isa.* 41. 9. *I have chosen thee, and not Cast thee away*; *Fear thou not*, *ver.* 10. So, *Heb.* 10. 35, *Cast not away your Confidence*: *Joh.* 14. 27, *Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*: and *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock; It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*. Innumerable are the Injunctions laid upon God's people against *Fear*: *Isa.* 35. 4. chap. 43. 5. ch. 41. 13. & 14. chap. 44. 2. *Jer.* 30. 10. *Dan.* 10. 19. *Joel* 2. 21. *Zeph.* 3. 16. *Hag.* 2. 5. *Zach.* 8. 13 & 15. *Math.* 10. 28. *Act.* 27. 24. *Rev.* 1. 17, &c. Therefore freedom from this Fear, is no impediment to Perseverance.

2. Promises

2 Promises of delivering from Fears. *Jacob shall be in quietness, and none shall make him afraid. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; He shall be quiet from fear of evil.* The promise is not made to Fear and fainting, but to Faith and Confidence; Ps. 27. 14, *Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thy heart.* If it had bin the mind of Christ, that Believers should still be under this Fear; He would not have told them, *They are passed from death to life, and shall not come in to condemnation: That they shall sit upon Thrones: That their Inheritance is reserved in heaven for them; and they kept for it; and that by the Mighty power of God.* The Result of all which, is, *That having these Promises, we should cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; perfecting holiness in the Fear of God: To serve Whom without fear,* was a main End of Christ's Redemption. Jer. 30. 10.
Psal. 112. 10.
Prov. 1. 33.
Joh. 5. 24.
Math. 19. 28.
1 Pet. 1. 4. 5.
2 Cor. 7. 1.
Luke, 1. 74.

3 Examples of Christian Resolution, *Not to fear.* Psal. 23. 4, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil.* Ps. 27. 3, *Tho' an host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.* Isa. 50. 7, *Therefore (that is, Because the Lord God had promised to help him; Therefore) have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be confounded.* Ps. 46. 2, *We will not fear, tho' the Earth be Removed.* Ps. 56. 4, *I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* and Ps. 49. 5, *Wherefore should I fear in the dayes of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?* These, if any thing, should have put him in fear; but his Faith resolves against it; according to Isa. 12. 2, *I will trust, and not be afraid.* i. e. He would not willingly admit the least mixture of fear with his Faith; and good Reason for it, since the joy of the Lord was his strength. Neh. 8. 14.

4. Instances of Thankfulness for deliverance from fears.

Psal. 34. 3. *O Magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together.* (But, what's the occasion of this joyfull triumph?) *I sought the Lord and He heard me, and [Delivered me from all my fears]* v. 4. Psal. 27. 6. *Therefore will I offer in His Tabernacle Sacrifices of Joy; And the Reason of it was, That God would hide him in His own Pa-*

villion, &c. That is, He would secure him from danger, and set him up above His Fears: Which surely, he could not, with any good Reason, have Rejoyced in; Nor have prayed, that God would *Restore to him the joyes of His Salvation*, if the Dread of Eternal fire, had been so good a friend to Perseverance.

Scriptures to this purpose might be multiplied: But these (I hope) may have left the Objection without footing. But, besides our Scripture-proof, It is evident in Experience; That nothing so Elevates the Spirit and Courage of a Man in great undertakings, as *assurance of Success*: But, while he is wavering, and doubtfull How he shall speed, especially while he meditates *Terrours*, and of them the *Dreadfullest*; his hands are enfeebled, Nor he has not his Wits about him: That which tends (in truth) to make a Man *Steadfast, Unmoveable, and alwaies to abound in the work of the Lord*; is not the fear of Miscarrying, and losing all at last; but, *Faith and a certain knowledge, that his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1. Cor. 15. 58.

If a Man once believing cannot lose his faith, Why is it said, Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall? and Look to your selves, that we lose not the things we have wrought? If no possibility of losing, what need such Cautions, and so great Circumspection?

The Maker of this Objection hath elsewhere granted, that the possession of *Canaan* was sure to *Abraham's* seed, so as all their unworthiness could not deprive them of it: And yet we find, their Induction and actual Possession, yoked (afterwards) with as many Conditions, Cautions, and limitations; as the Promise of Salvation to Believers, any where is; and yet, Nevertheless Certain. But, for more particular answer,

1. It is evident, That a Righteous Man *may fall*; and as evident it is, That he *cannot fall finally*: For, tho' he falls *Seaven times* in a day, as often does he Rise agen, *Pro. 24. 26.* And this, because the Lord upholdeth him with His hand, *Psal. 37. 24.* And *Psal. 145. The Lord*

upholdeth all that fall : Either He stayes them when they are falling; Or, He so Orders and limits the matter, that they fall not into mischief, as others do : And, to be sure, He'l set them on their feet agen. The Absolute Promise cannot be Null'd or discein'd by Cautionary words elsewhere delivered : It cannot therfore be meant of a Total and Final falling away, which the Scripture-Current exprelly Runs against.

2. There are Considerations enough and of great weight, Why Believers should take heed of Falling, without supposing a Total loss of their Faith ; (The breaking of a Man's *bones*, is ground sufficient for such a Caution, altho' he be sure that his *Neck* shall be safe :) The dishonour done to his Father ; The shame that is put upon Christ ; Grieving the Comforter ; Scandalizing the good ways of God ; stumbling the Weak ; Strengthening the Wicked ; The unfitting of him for his duty ; Interrupting his Peace and Communion with God ; &c. Every of which will weigh deep, with a soul that is born of God.

3. The Lord brings-about His Purposes (for most part) by Means ; Of which, Cautions are a part ; and by which (as a Means) He keeps-off the evill Caution'd-against. In the 1 *John*. 2. 28. the Apostle exhorts them to *abide in Christ* : (whom certain Professors had relinquished, *v*. 19.) And, as purposely intending to obviate this objection, he tells them, *That they shall abide in him*, *v*. 27. Whereby he strengthens them to their duty.

For the other place objected, (*viz. Look to your selves that we lose not the things we have wrought* ;) It is one thing to lose (for a time) the *Sense* and *Comfort* of Our state ; as *David*, *Heman*, and Others, did ; and another thing to lose the state it self ; which a Believer shall never do, as is shewn afore. Of much like Import is that in 2 *Pet*. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. verses, where he exhorts them, *To give all diligence, to add one Grace to another* : And, to help them in their work, he tells them, 1. What advantages they shall have by their So-doing ; They shall not be unfruitfull in the knowledge of *Jesus Christ* ; i. e. It shall evidence to them that the know-

Heb. 4. 1.

ledge they have, is a *real* knowledge; which cannot be known from that which is *formal* only, but by such an effect. That also by this Means it shall be increased; The using of things well, and to their proper End, being the readiest way to their Improvement, according to *John 7. 17. He that will do my Will, shall know of my Doctrine.* 2. He then sets afore them, the loss they shall have, in case they neglect this great Duty of *Adding Grace to Grace*: *They will become blind*; that is, Unable to see afarr off; And forget, That *they were purged from their old sins*; that is, Their Remisness in this duty will bring *obscurity* upon their Evidences; That which was cleer to them *afore*, will *Now* become Clouded, and be as if it were not; It may *seem* to them, That they are short of that Rest, which yet is sure to them; And so, they'l be put to begin their work *Anew*: Whereas, *if they do these things, they shall never fall*; i. e. They shall not fall from their *steadfastness*, Nor lose that cleer sight and assurance which now they have, touching their good estate, viz. as being *partakers of the Divine Nature*, and *Purged from their old Sins*; Which those Neglects might put out of their sight; and so, lose them the sense and comfort of *what they had wrought*.

1 Tim. 1. 19.

Acts 8. 13, 23.

We read in John 6. 60. That many of Christ's disciples forsook him: In Timothy, Of some, who as concerning the Faith, had made Shipwreck: And of Simon Magus, who once believed, and was afterwards found in the bond of Iniquity?

Phil. 1. 18.

Rom. 2. 20.

1 Tim. 6. 5.

The Objection has an intire Answer made-ready to its hand, in 1 *John 2. 19. They went out from us, because they were not of us; For, if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us.* Seeming Faith may really be lost, as theirs was; And Real Faith may *Seemingly* be lost, as was the Apostles, *Luke 24. 21. Heb. 4. 1. Seeming Faith is really lost, because it was but Seeming; Real Faith cannot be lost, because it is Real.* Yet, we shall find, That *that* which is but *seeming*, is frequently call'd by the name of *that* it seems to be; As in *Matth. 13. 12.* It is said, *That which he*

he [*bath*;] In *Luke* 8. 18, (speaking of the same thing) it is rendred, *That which he [Seemeth] to have* : So those who forsook Christ; they were disciples but in *shew*; They never believed in *truth*; as appeares by the 64 verse of the 6. *John*, *Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not*: And this (*viz.* because it was but a *seeming* faith they had) He gives as the Reason of their Now-forsoaking Him.

As for *Simon Magus* the Answer is as cleer concerning him; where let us consider,

1. That a Man may be said to believe, and yet not be a Believer; As a Righteous Man *To Sin*, and yet not be a *Sinner*. To be a Believer, is to be thorow-paced in faith; To believe all that is to be believed; and to have the heart united to it: *Thus Simon* believed not; and if he had, he could not have thought the Holy Ghost vendible for Money.

2. His faith seems to be onely such a belief concerning *Philip*, as the *Samaritans* sometimes had concerning *Simon*; *viz.* That he was *the great power of God*. For, finding him- self over-match by *Philip*, who cast-out the Spirits which he (perhaps) had possessed them with; he could not, now, but give the precedency to *Philip*, as having a greater power than himself: and therefore, *he continued with Philip, wondering at what he did*; v. 13. *Acts* 8.

3. *Simon's* believing might be only an outward professional faith, taken-up for by-respects; (which may well be supposed) to preserve his interest and repute among the people, who now began to fall from him, and to follow *Philip*; whose disciple he himself will profess to be, rather than be quite cashier'd. Besides, this profession of his, might (in his conceit) be a step towards his *purchasing the gift of the Holy Ghost*; which if he could obtain, he had then been agen in as good a Condition, for reputation and profit, as before.

If any would say, We read not of this distinction of faith, into *true* and *false*. I answer.

The Scripture frequently speaks of *persons* and *things*, according to *Vulgar Esteem*; or what they profess'd themselves.

2 Chr. 28. 23.

1 King. 22. 5.

ver. 22.

Tit. 1. 16.

2 King. 17. 32.

ver. 34.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

selves to be ; *Ahaz* is said To Sacrifice to the Gods of *Damascus* that smote him : and yet neither were they Gods, nor did they smite him: but it's spoke according to his own superstitious opinion of them. So, those 400 Men who prophesied afore *Ahab*, They are called Prophets ; Not that they were so indeed, but because they So professed themselves ; or because So reputed by *Ahab* and the people. A prophet is one that is inspired by the Holy Ghost ; which those Men were not, but by a lying spirit. Now, *Simon Magus* was no more a true Believer, than those true Prophets ; Nor his faith any more of the right kind, than their predictions true prophecies. We also find, that the Scripture makes the *Coming-to-pass* of the thing foretold, to be the evidence of a true prophet : According to which Rule, *Perseverance to salvation* is to demonstrate the truth of faith ; and where-ever this follows not, there faith was but pretended ; They profess to know God, but in deeds do deny Him, As of those *Samaritans* before mentioned, It is said, *They feared the Lord* ; and presently after, that *They feared [not] the Lord* ; They feared him in shew, but not in truth.

4. The Foundation of God standeth sure ; having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His : He brings it in to comfort believers, touching the Sureness of their standing ; when others, of as glorious out-sides, make Shipwreck of the faith : It stands sure, because the Lord knoweth them that are His : He knows whom He hath Chosen ; For whom He hath received the Attonement ; whom He hath Called, and caused to take hold of His Covenant ; And these shall surely be kept, Notwithstanding the wofull backslidings of others.

*If one that believes not Now, may have faith hereafter ;
Then, one that is Now a Believer, may lose his faith, and
turn Apostate ?*

It followes not, That, because Christ can bind Satan, and cast him out ; therefore Satan can do so by Christ. He can come into the Devil's Nursery, when He will ; Take a Crab-stock and transplant it, and Graff it with a Noble Cyons:

Cyons: But Satan cannot come into God's Vinyard, (which is a Garden enclosed) and take thence What him pleaseth. One who is now dead in sin, may be quickened; but, being once alive, can dye no more: It is Chriit's own Assertion, *He that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall never dye*: Which cannot be meant of any other but a *spiritual* death; which is all one with losing his faith. Joh. 11. 26.

A Righteous Man may turn away from his Righteousness; and that so, that he shall dye for it; Ezek. 18. 24.

There is a twofold Righteousness, 1. Moral; Such as Paul had before his Conversion; *This* a Man may continue in to the last, and yet not be Saved: 2. There is a Gospel Righteousness; (1) *Imputed*; This is the Righteousness of Christ, by which we are Justified: (2) *Infused*, This is the Divine Nature communicated by the Spirit of Christ, whereby we are Sanctified: These two go inseparably, and can never be lost. But, The Righteousness spoken of in the place objected, seems to be of the former Sort, *viz. Moral or Outward* Righteousness; For, Outward Conformity to the Law, was the Condition of their possessing the land of *Canaan*, with long life and prosperity in it. This (if they retain'd it) gave them a legal Right to those Promises: If they turn'd from it, they ran into a forfeiture: And lose it they might, for they had no promise That they should abide in it. But, the New Covenant undertakes for *That*, as is evident by comparing *Jer. 31. 31-33.* with chap. 32. 40. But if any will yet suppose, The Righteous Man spoken of in that 18. of *Ezek.* to be meant of a true Believer; there is (I hope) in the Answers foregoing, to Solve it.

If any should alledg: - But suppose a Believer be taken away in his Sin, (as perhaps, *Josiah* was) and hath not time to Repent of it? I Answer, 1. It cannot be proved that this was the case with *Josiah*: He (probably) had time sufficient between his Wounding and his Death: For, he was carried from *Megiddo* to *Jerusalem*, before he dyed: But 2. There was *That* in him that would have Repented; and God reckons of a Man according to what he *would* Do: It being in

David s.

A Practical Discourse

David's heart to build him an House, it was accepted as if he had done it. The *Root* of the matter is in every Regenerate person, which if it had time, would put-forth it self in fruits : and therefore They shall not be dealt with as barren trees, which have not *that* substance in them.

*The Promise of Perseverance, is not made to Faith, that
That shall not fail; but in reference to the favour of God,
viz. That if Men go-on to Believe, they shall abide in his
love ?*

Thus to give the sense of the Promise, is 1. To enervate it, to make it speak but according to the Covenant of works: It bereaves it wholly of that *Betterness* the Scripture ascribes to it, in *Heb. 8.6.* 2. It renders the Promise as speaking *fallaciously*; as making shew of *That* it intends not: It would be but as if he had said, You shall *keep* the favour of God, if you do not *lose* it. 3. Faith is the Soul's Coming to God; Unbelief, its departing from Him: The Promise (therefore) that secures against departing from God, secures your Continuance in Believing: He that undertakes you shall be *Crown'd*, doth *virtually* undertake for your holding-out to the end of your Race.

*Others agen, dispose Otherwise of those Promises, recorded
in the 36 of Ezek. and 32 of Jeremy, touching Men's not-
departing from God; Restraining them to the Jewish Na-
tion, and to the last Dayes.*

To this, may readily be answered,

1. That the Time which *then* was, when the Apostles wrote, is called The last time, 1 *John. 2. 18.* *Alls* 2. 17.

2. Albeit that some particular times and persons are more peculiarly concerned in the Promises of the old Testament, especially such as refer to temporal things; yet is there no one Promise, but, in the spirituality of it, belongs to Every one that belongs to Christ, (that is, Jews in spirit :) *No Scripture is of private Interpretation*; and therefore Not to be Confin'd to those particular times or persons, when and
to

to whom they were delivered; They were written for the use of All, 1 Cor. 10. 11. And

3. We find them accordingly apply'd in the New Testament; The Promise made to *Joshua* touching the success of his Warfare in *Canaan*, is by the Apostle applied to Believers in general, as an Argument against overmuch carefulness in a Married State, and for Contentedness with our present condition: So likewise, the Prophecie of *Isaiah*, touching the hypocrites of his time, is by Christ applied to the Pharisees: And the Promises made to the *Jews*, in *Isa.* 54. 13. and *Jer.* 31. 33, are applied to the Gentiles, in *John* 6. 45. and *Rom.* 4. 15. &c. 16.

Josh. 1. 5.

with

Heb. 13. 5.

Isa. 29. 13.

with

Math. 15. 7. 8

This Doctrine of Absolute Perseverance, lays the Reigns of Security on the Neck of the flesh, and of the old man in believers?

1. This Objection is (in effect) the same with the first; Only it speaks broader; which shews, That the farther Men go in opposing the Truth, the worse language they give it. That *Many* who disbelieve the Doctrine of Perseverance, have given the Flesh its full Range and liberty,--Needs no proof: But, That any Believer hath made that impious improvement of it, will never be made-out.

2. The Objection deserves no Quarter; because it highly Reproaches the Goodness and Faithfulness of God; as if, for a Fish, He had given His People a Scorpion; For so it would be, If His Giving them Absolute Promises, should prove an Indulgence to the flesh.

3. It also Contradicts the known and constant way of holy Men's Arguing and Inferring from Absolute Promises, and the highest Assurance: See a few Instances of this; *Col.* 3. 4, *When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.* The Result of it is, *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth.* 1 *Joh.* 3. 2; [*We know*] *That when He shall appear, We shall be like Him:* And what is the fruit of this knowledge? *Every Man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.* The like ye have in 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, *For, we [know] that if our earthly*

house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens: and what the effect of this great Knowledg was, ye have in the p. v. *Wherefore We labour, That whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him.* In 2 Cor. 6. 18. is repeated the Sum of the New Covenant; *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty:* See now the use he makes of it; (And all Believers have the same Mind :) *Having therefore these Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthyness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holyness in the fear of God.*

Job knew, That his Redeemer lived, and that he should live with him; and yet, as to holiness and integrity, *Not a man like him in all the Earth.* And that holy Man Asaph was fully assured of Persevering infallibly, *Psal. 73. 24, Thou shalt guide me by thy Counsel, and afterward Receive me to Glory.* This did not loosen the Reigns, but made him cleave closer to God, Renouncing all but Him and His service; *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* v. 25: And, *It is good for Me to draw nigh to God,* v. 28. The like frame of Spirit we find in David, *Psal. 23, [Surely,] Goodness and Mercy shall follow me all the dayes of my life;* His Result also, *is, I will dwell in the house of God for ever.*

And, that these were not temporary fits and flashes, but from a settled Principle; is further apparent by his manner of Reasoning, in *Psal. 27. 5, 6, In time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavillion:* (no safer place on Earth, nor in Heaven :) *and now shall my head be lifted up above mine Enemies round about me.* What follows upon this Mounted Assurance? *Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry?* O No! But, *[Therefore] will I offer Sacrifices of Joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord!* He was now upon his high-places, out of the Reach of danger; but did not grow Remiss upon it, Refrain Prayer, and give-over Calling upon God; but falls the more fervently upon that which shall be the Uphold of all in Heaven: He would rather have been Remiss without this Assurance, as himself confesseth at the 13. verse, *I had fainted, unless I had believed*

to see the Goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Paul's assurance of obtaining what he ran-for, was a Mighty strengthening to him in his Race: Who so Crucified to the World as *Paul*? so abundant in all kind of service, or more ready to dye for Christ, than he? Who yet had the fullest Assurance of holding-out, and of Receiving the Crown of Righteousness at last; And, that Nothing should separate him from it.

By these ye may gather, That Believers are of a Nobler Extract, than to love God *the less*, because He loves them *so Much*; and that 'tis no trivial Slaunder to Insinuate, That Believers, (especially, such as have Assurance,) are most exposed and given to backsliding: Which is (sure) an Unnatural consequent of their being *Sealed to the day of Redemption*. Such objections do also argue the Authors of them Not well-acquainted with the good ways of God; Nor with that spiritual obligeing sweetness that is found in them; Which any One who hath tasted thereof in truth, would not Turn-from, altho' his future happiness were not concern'd in it. Nor do they Consider the frame and nature of the New Creature; which hath spiritual senses, fitted to discern what makes for its own preservation, and what makes against it. Had you Fifteen years added to your life, and a *Certainty* of it; Would you therefore forsake your food, and disuse the ordinary means of preserving life? The *Jews* had an Absolute Promise, That God would save *Jerusalem* from the King of *Assyria*, (who then besieged it;) Did they setope their Gates, and draw off their Guards upon it? Sense and Reason would teach them Otherwise; Which Grace does not destroy, but perfect. It is a sparkle of that Heavenly fire, which cannot live out of its Element; nor can all the Waters under Heaven, quench it. It is a part of the Divine Nature, and so loves and hates, as the Father of it doth; and It will cleave to Him in every State: If *He save me Alive, I'll Serve Him*; If *He kill me, I'll yet trust in him*; In life and in death, I will be the Lord's. This is the natural disposition of the New Creature; It favours only the things which are of God: And the higher-tasted They are

by Assurance, the more is he Aloft, and above the lure of carnal Divertifements ; Not to be Reigned or led by them. Therefore, Let God be true, and His Prophets and Apostles be reckoned for faithfull Witnesses ; And every one that speaks Otherwise, a lyar.

The next thing, in courfe, is To consider What improvment may be made of this Doctrine: Which, one would surely conclude, of very great usefulness, since the Scriptures are so greatly concern'd about it.

In the General, it affords Matter of eminent Support to Believers ; especially in *difficult* Cafes : It also evinceth Matter of Duty, on the Believers part : And from the Examples forequoted, fomthing of Direction in reference to both : Which I shall here put intermixedly together.

Infer. I.

First, Stand still, and behold the Salvation of the Lord ! And at the sight of this great thing, Say in your hearts, with an holy Astonishment, *What hath God wrought !* Let your Souls be filled and enlarged with everlasting admirings of that Grace (that Sovereign Grace) which has thus impreguably secur'd the Salvation of His Chosen ; That no Manner of thing, whether within them or without them, shall be able to hinder them of it : *Even the Gates of hell shall not prevail against it* : No, Not so much as *one* of the itakes thereof shall be Removed, and that for ever. *Shaken* you may be, and tossed with tempest ; but never *Over-turn'd* because ye have an *Eternal Root*. *Electing love* is of that Sovereignty, That it Rules and Over-rules all in Heaven and Earth *Christ Jesus* our Saviour and Lord ; The *Holy Ghost* our Sanctifier Councillor and Comforter, in all that they have done, do, or will do, do still pursue that scope : All Ordinances, Providences, Temptations, Afflictions, and whatever can be Named, (be it good, or be it bad, in it self) Life, death, things present, and things to come, are all made Subservient to the Decree of Election ; And do all Work-together, To compass and bring-about its Most glorious designation.

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If the Course and Conduct of *Common* Providences were truly lined-out; It would yield an illustrious Prospect: How much more the Conduct, Order, and End, of those *special* Providences, which are proper to, and conversant about, Election! When all the peeces therof shall be brought-together and set-in-order, how beautifull will it be! Angels and Men shall shout for the Glory of it! Then 'twill be evident, God has done nothing in vain, or impertinent to your blessedness: That what ever hath befallen you here (however contr. ry to your present sense and opinion of it) was designed in very *faithfulness* to you. That if any of those manifold (and seemingly Cross) Occurrences, you have been exercised-with, had been omitted; it would have been a Blank in your story, a blot in your Scutcheon of honour. When you shall see, What Contrivances have been against you; what Art, Subtilty, Malice, and Power, they were agitated-with; How unable you were to Fore see, prevent, avoid, or repell them; And how all the Attributes of God and His Providences, each one in its time and place, (which was always most seasonable,) came-in to your Rescue; Retorting on your adversaries, and safeguarding you; yea, how that which was death in itself, was made to work life in you; How amiable and admirable will the story of it be! That when your faith was weak, the Lord did not withdraw from you; That when it was at its height and strength, He *then* did for you above all you could believe or think; and through an unspeakable Preas of Difficulties and Contradictions, He carried-on his work in you; even bearing you on Eagle's Wings, until He had brought you to Himself; How will you Magnifie His work, and Admire it then! Begin it Now.

Secondly, Let us study more the Knowledg and Contents *Infer. II.* of this Great truth, of *Believers Invincible Perseverance*; the Rise, Progress, and Tendency of it; and what advantages it yields us; which (indeed) are many and very considerable.

1. As it is a part of the Doctrine of Election; which teacheth That Nothing in us, but Grace and love in God, was
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Luke 7. 43.

the only Original Cause of our Salvation : The knowledge whereof will work in the Soul, an holy Ingenuity and love towards God, whom nothing offends but Sin. *Simon* answered right, when he said, *He that had most forgiven him, would love most* : Whence it follows, That he who believes the Free Remission of all his sins from first to last ; must needs love God *more* than One who believes only the pardon of those that are past, and *that* so, as that they may all be charged upon him agen : Or if not, That yet he may possibly perish for those to-come ; perhaps in the last Moment of his life ; For, he is not sure (Nay, 'tis very doubtfull, if dependent on his own natural will) That Faith or Repentance shall be his last Act.

2 Cor. 4. 16.

Now, This Grace of Love being the strongest and most operative Principle; he that is led by it must act accordingly ; that is, Vigorously, and without weariness, as *Paul* did. And *Joseph*, having received large Tokens of God's love to him, and expecting more yet ; argues against and (with an holy disdain and sleight of hand) puts-by the Temptation, *How can I doe this, and sin against God, who hath dealt, and will deal, so bountifully with me !*

2. As it teacheth the soul to Depend upon God for its keeping, as having His Almighty Power absolutely engaged for it: Whereas, if the efficacy and event of all that God doth for Me, should depend upon something to be done by Me, who am a frail Creature, and prone to Revolt; I should still be in fear, because still in danger of Falling, and losing all at last : And this Fear, being an enfeebling passion, must needs render my Resistance and all my endeavours, both irregular and weak : Whereas a Magnanimous and fearless spirit, who sees himself Clothed with a *Divine Power*, shall have his Wits (as we say) more about him ; to discern Dangers and Advantages ; and consequently, how to eschew the one, and improve the other.

3. As it gives assurance, *Our labour shall not be in vain*: This made those believing Hebrews to endure that great fight of afflictions, and to take joyfully the spoiling of their Goods ; because they [knew] they had in Heaven a better and

Heb. 10. 33, 34.

and more-enduring substance. All manner of Accomplishments put-into-one, and made your own; would not so invincibly Steel your foreheads, and strengthen your hearts, as, To be Sure of Success, and to come-off Conquerour: The Apostle therefore brings it in, as the highest encouragement in our Christian Warfare, in *Rom. 6. 14. and chap. 8. 37.* And our blessed Lord Himself (who, of all others, had the hardest Chapter to Run-through;) It made His Face as a Flint, because [Hebrew] He should not be Confounded. *Isa 50 7.*

Thirdly, Make it one, and that a Mayn part of your business, to foyl and disprove the Objections that are brought against this Doctrine: And your Nearest way to it, is, *Growing in Grace, 2 Pet. 3. 18.* with chap. 1. from the 5th. verse to the 10th.

1. Lay aside, and Cast-away every weight, especially the sin that doth most easily beset you; your bosom sin, whatsoever it be; Cast them to the Moles and to the Batts: They are not fit-Mates for Day-light Creatures: It is a Noble prize you Run-for; Therefore, Clogg not your self with any thing that may hinder, or retard your pace. *Isa 2. 20. 1 Thel. 5. 5, 6*

2. Keep your selves in the Love of God: that is, keep-up and maintain a spiritual sense of His love to you, and a lively answer of holy affections towards Him. Whatever may tend to obscure or lessen your sense of it, have nothing to doe with that unjust thing; keep your self from Idols; let nothing have an interest in your love but God; and all things els, but in subordination and with respect to Him only.

3. Watch against the Beginnings and first Motions of sin; Nip it in the bud; Abstain from all appearance of evil; and walk not on the brink of your liberty. It is easier to keep-out an Invader than to Expell him being Entred; To keep-down a Rebel, and prevent his Rising, than to Conquer him when he is up. Great and black Clouds have small beginnings; the bigness of your hand (at first;) may rise and spread, to cover the whole Heavens. Therefore, keep-off sin at staff's end.

Exod. 14. 13.

2 Sam. 5. 24.

Psal. 73. 23.

4. Be diligent and industrious in it : Think not, because it is God who performeth all things for you, that therefore you may sit-still, or be Remiss in your duty ; your Arms and Armour were not provided to Rust in your Tent. There may be (indeed) such a Juncture in Providence, that it may be your duty (and so, your strength) to sit-still ; as was theirs at the Red-sea : This is, when all farther Motion is shut-up to you ; and then the Lord will doe His Work without you : But usually, There is something to be done on our part : Tho' the Lord would go-forth before *David*, and smite the *Philistims* ; yet *David* must bestir himself : This thing is constantly to be affirm'd, That *they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good Works* ; *Tir. 3. 8.* And do it the rather, *To cut-off occasion from them which desire occasion ; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we, 2 Cor. 11. 12.*

5. Cleave to Jesus Christ, and to Him only ; and trust not to your holding of him, but to His holding of you : This did *David* when he says, *Thou holdest me by my Right hand.* Follow Him, as Men (whose dependence is upon it) follow the Court : Whiles following Him, you cannot do amiss ; nor want any good thing, whether for Counsel, Strength, or Otherwise.

6. Forget what is behind, and press on towards perfection ; That if possible, you might attain to the Resurrection of the Dead ; *i.e.* To be perfectly holy : Tho' Perfectness, in the perfection of it, is not attainable here ; yet, the higher you aim, the higher shall your Attainment be ; and the farther-off from losing what you have. Keep the Mark still in your eye, and shun whatever might intercept your Sight of it.

These are some of the ways to make your Calling and Election sure : And if ye do these things, ye shall prove this Doctrine to be true ; And either Prevent or Retort those Carnal and groundless Calumnies that are brought against it.

Infer. IV.

Fourthly, Since there are such Arguments for Believers Invincible Perseverance ; Let us all so demean our selves, That
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we may have them *all* stand on our side, for proof and evidence That we are of that happy Remnant, whom the Great God hath set-apart for himself; And whom He hath made and wrought for this self same thing; And as it was His purpose, so let it be our Spirit and practice, to glorifie His Rich Grace.

1. If born of God, let us shew-forth the virtues of our Father; and bear our selves as His Children, both towards Him, and towards the World: Let us live upon Him, and live to Him; Rejoycing always before Him; *first*, for *His* Own blessedness, and then for *our* own as derived from His, and by Him reserv'd in Heaven for us; And all, as designing to honour Him as our Father.

2. If we have Faith, let it appear by our Works: It must be some *singular* thing that must distinguish us from other Men: It is not profession, Nor Words, Nor Actions neither (as to the Matter of them, and so far as visible to Men,) that will approve us Believers; but the *Principle* whence they grow, and the *End* they drive at; The *Result* of *Abraham's* faith was, *To give Glory to God.*

3. Let us carry our selves under all dispensations not only quietly but thankfully; and so as to Answer God's End: Walk humbly; Hate the thing that's evil; Have the World under your feet; Esteem preciouslly of Christ; Honour His Ordinances; let every Grace have its perfect work; and Rejoyce in hopes of that glory, which all these things are preparatory to.

4. If One with Christ, and He our Mediator; Then let us walk as He walked; who held His own Will alwaies subject to His Father's; Reckoning it *His Meat to do His Will*, and to *finish His Work*: Let us also wait His Advice and Counsel in every business, and follow it; Commit our Cause to Him, and Interest Him in all our Concernments.

5. Apply selves to every Attribute of God, according to the present occasion; and dwell upon them, and leave them not, until we have the Grace and Help intended by them.--They are all made over to the heirs of Salvation,

to live upon: Let it not be said, That in the midst of our abundance we are in streights!

6. If made for the Glory of God, Make-good your End: He is *glorious in Holiness*, and by Holiness onely can you glorifie Him. Bear (therefore) on the forehead of your Designs and Conversation, that Royal Inscription [*Holiness to the Lord:*] By this, you will set to your seal, That God is true; and approve your selves to be *Children that will not lie*. 'Twill also be of singular use and service to your selves, as to that *other* End of your Being: That you have *glorified God on the Earth*, will be a substantial argument That *He will glorifie you* in the World to come. For, tho' your personal Righteousness be not your *Title* to the Heavenly Inheritance; yet your constant progression in Holiness, will be your *best evidence* (next the immediate witnessings of the Spirit) that you *have* a Title, and that your Title is *good*. Since, therefore, we were made for, and expect such things, *What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and Godliness?*

7. If under the Covenant of Grace, let us reckon our selves strengthened with all might, and hold to it, as having all our salvation in it; Both Keeping, Support, Recovery and Settlement, Grace and Glory. Not Minding so much how any thing looks or feels at present; but what is the End it tends to; For if the End be good, the Means (as such) cannot be otherwise. And truly, we cannot have a better evidence of our Interest in this Covenant, than a total Devolving of our selves upon it.

And well it is for us, (who find in our Selves such a proneness to backslide,) That our Eternal condition doth not depend on our selves; but upon *that foundation of God* mentioned in *Timothy*; where the Apostle, speaking of some who had made Ship-wreck of the faith, left true Believers should faint in their minds, at the sight and apprehension of it; he tells them, That *Nevertheless* (that is, Notwithstanding this wofull backsliding of some, perhaps of eminent profession, yet) *the foundation of God standeth sure*; q.d. They that are of this Foundation are sure to be kept: And he firms it with

this

Joh. 17. 14.

2 Pet. 3. 11.

Iia. 56. 4 & 6.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

this Seal, *The Lord knoweth them that are His* : He knows whom He hath *Chosen*, and concerning whom He hath *Covenanted*, That they shall not depart from Him; and therefore He will not let them go ; (They shall be kept as those Seaven thousand were, from bowing the knee to Baal.) Adding this Caution withall, *That every one which nameth the Name of the Lord, should depart from iniquity* ; Which, as it is a Means of God's appointing, to keep from Apostacy ; So, it shall be to them an *evidence*, That they are of that Foundation, and shall be kept. For, it being his scope, to Comfort believers against their Misgivings, which arise from a sense of their own weakness, and a like apthness in themselves to Revolt ; He needs must use an Argument suited to such an End : And therefore, in saying [*The foundation of God standeth sure* ;] He must intend, Believers standing-sure upon it : For, The standing-sure of the foundation, would be small Comfort to us, if yet We might be blown off it, or sink besides it.

Does God take care for Sparrows ? for Oxen ? for Ravens ? Much more for believing souls, who have Committed themselves to His keeping. Let the Fowler do all he can, Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground : you'l say, Without the Will of God, they cannot ? And the Will of God is, That they shall not : (*A thousand may fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand; but it shall not come nigh him.*) Psal. 91.7. He that determin'd such a sparrow shall not fall ; determin'd also, to keep him from that as would *cause* him to fall : And therefore, either the Fowler shall not find the Bird ; or the Bird shall discern his approach, or smell the powder, and be gone : Or, if he shoot, he shall miss his mark ; Or if he hit, it shall light-on the feathers that will grow-agen ; Or, on some fleshy part, that may be lick'd whole ; Or perhaps, it shall open an Ulcer that could not otherwise be Cured : A Believer's *heel* may be bruised, but his *vital-parts* are out of Reach, and therefore safe.

Fifthly, Let this Doctrine of Believer's invincible perseverance in Faith and Holiness, strengthen your hearts against all sorts of doubts and fears, which may arise from the pre-

Phil. 1. 6.

2 Thes. 1. 11.

sence of Indwelling-Sin, with its frequent and sturdy insurrections; Since *He that hath begun, will also perfect His Work with Power.* Judge righteous Judgment: *Of our selves* (indeed) we cannot judge worse than we deserve; but of our *state*, we may: Therefore, For help in this Case, Consider.

Mat. 13, 31, 33.

chap. 25. 29.

Joh. 10. 10.

Ps. 18. 32.

1. That tho' the New Nature shall certainly expunge the old, at *last*; yet the Work is not perfected *here*: But, this for your present relief; That the Best Principle is still predominant and getting ground; (how ever your present sense may judge of it;) and the old party shall never recover its Wasting condition: For, the Kingdom of God once in the heart, will surely Work and spread it self, till the whole lump is favoured by it. (To assure us of this, is the drift of divers Parables in the Gospell.) *To him that [hath] shall be given: He that [hath] life, shall have it more abundantly: As it was God who girded you with strength, so He will make your way perfect.* Suppose, that Faith and Holiness beat present, but as two little flocks of kids; And sin (like the *Syrians Army*) fills the Countrey: Be not dismayed; The king of *Israel* will cleer the Countrey of them: His spirit shall lift up a Standard against them; and though they come in like a flood, by Him shall their proud waves be stayed. The Lord says to you in this Case as He did to *Jeremy*; *I have made thee an Iron Pillar and brazen Walls, against the whole land: They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee*: Jer. 1. 18, 19. Or as once to His People, concerning the Gyant Og; *Fear him not, For I have delivered him into thy hand, with all his Army.*

1 Pet. 1. 7.

2. This Sickness is not unto death: The Conflict is not to weaken or destroy, but for the tryal and improvement of your faith and other Graces: The very tryal whereof is a precious thing, and shall be found so at last; both to the Glory of Him that tries you, and yours who are tried: *Abraham, David, Job*, and others, are pregnant examples of this; They came forth like Gold; More pure, solid, and flexible. *David* indeed, tho' he held fast his confidence a great while; yet still being pursued and Over-prest, Every day

day involv'd in dangers anew; and having once admitted Carnal Reason to be of his Counsel, he began to flagg in his faith, (*I shall one day perish,--and All men are lyars--*) But it was in his *haste*, Not considering the *sureness* of an Absolute Promise: He therefore (when he had better weighed it) confesses his fault, and Recovers from it: And his faith was improv'd by his tryal; For, being come agen-to it-self, he comfortably concludes, That *Goodness and Mercy shall follow him all the days of his life*; and (Notwithstanding his present exile) *he shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.* Pl. 23 7.

3. Be it alwaies Remembred, That God reckon's of a man according to what his *Mind* is; And you ought so also to reckon of your self: This was *Paul's* courle, in *Rom. 7.* where he thus reasoneth; *Now, If I do that I would nor; It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in Me.* Before Rom. 7. 20. Conversion it was *Saul*, but *Now 'tis Sin.* Believers may be led-captive (at-times) even after they have sworn fealty to their true Lord; But *still* they are *His* in their *Mind*, and that's their Mark. It is the same with that in *John*; *Who-so-ever is born of God, doth not Commit sin*; And, *he cannot sin, because he is born of God: i. e.* He does not, nor he cannot 1 Joh. 3 9. sin, as the Devil's children do; for their Wills are in it; (according to *John. 8. 44,* *The lusts of your father [ye will do:]*) But, a Regenerate person, *The evil he doth, he [Allows nor:]* And this is a staying Consideration, That if *with our Mind we serve the law of God*, it shall not Ruin us, that *with our flesh* Rom. 7. 25. *we serve the law of Sin.*

But how shall I know it? If you be forced, you will Cry-out; and if you Cry, it is a *Rape*; and shall not be charged to your account: ye have the Law for it, in *Deut. 22. 25, 26, 27.* So, he that kills a Man [*against his Will*] is not reckoned a Murderer, Nor worthy of death; albeit, the Act it self, be Exod. 21. 13. with Deut. 19. 4, 5. the same that another Man, whose *will* was in it, shall dye-for.

4. Believers are *Trees of Righteousness*, and of the Lord's own planting; and therefore, *they shall not fear when heat cometh*- They have their Autumns (too often) and blighting Jer. 17. 3. ing

Joh. 15. 2.

Pl. 92. 14.

1 Joh. 3. 2. 9.
chap. 2. 27.

2 ep. Joh. v. 2.

Eph. 4. 13.

Prov. 30. 2.

Rom. 7. 24.

ver. 25.

ting Winds; (perhaps in the Spring-time too) and also luxuriant branches and Suckers, proceeding from the Old stock; which rob the good Ones of their sap, and make their fruit less both in bulk and beauty: But still their substance is in them, and therefore they Revive, and flourish again. And whiles those Suckers are Nipt and Prun'd-off, the true Branches are preserved and Cherished; *They shall bring-forth fruit in their old age. They that are Now* (i. e. Once; They that are Once) *the Children of God*, shall never be Otherwise: save only in a greater likeness to their Father And tho' their living on Him, and their likeness to Him; be very weakly; (especially at times, as the Natural life of Infants is) yet, being *born*, they must bekept; And the Will and Care of their Father is, To Nurse them up to a *Perfect Man*.

You'l say, (perhaps) That never had any such cause of Complaint as you; and possibly it may be so: To be sure, you know not that They had: And those you compare your self with, have said as much of themselves; and they had the like Cause; (for our hearts are fashion'd alike; Onely, each one best knows the plague of his own :) *Agur*, a Man of great Wisdom and Holiness, says of himself, That he was *more brutish than any Man*. But, suppose it be true, That Others corruptions have not broke-out as yours have done; yet May not this put your faith to a stand; Much less Make you weary, Recoil, or to faint in your Minds: For, the same Grace that *prevented* them, can *pardon* you; and will if you cast your self upon it. Ye may (indeed) be allow'd to complain of your sins; for, Nothing els have ye to complain of: Therefore, Complain and Cry-out as loud as you will, *Oh wretched Man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* But withall, Betake you to the same Refuge that he did, & abide by it; *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!* Here you may triumph over all, both Complaints and the Causes of them.

It must always be granted, That to Overcome Sin, *Comb'n'd, Intrench'd, and fortifi'd*, as it is; is a great Undertaking, and must be gon-through with; There is no Retreat

to be founded, Nor Armour provided for your back; Every Mother's son must either kill or be kill'd in this Combate; There's no Compounding the Difference, Nor discharge in this Warfare, till the day be perfectly Won; But What a Recruit is there levied, and always stands ready, as a sure Reserve! *viz.* That *though the Conflict be sharp, the success is sure.* In order whereto; (amongst other Rules and Articles of War,) bear in mind these few following:

1. Intangle not your self; but shun and avoid whatever may prove a clog, or unfit you for duty.

2. Exercise your self in things that will teach you to handle your Arms; and tending to Nourish your faith.

3. Stand on your Guard watchfully; that ye be not surpris'd by sudden excursions, or under pretence of friendship.

4. Arm your self with the same Mind that was in Christ; set your face as a flint; and conclude, That *ye shall not be confounded.*

5. Submit to the place your General hath set you in. It must have been some bodie's lot, and why not yours? and the hotter it is, the more honourable.

6. Look that ye fight with proper weapons; which are onely to be had at the Covenant of Grace, and the Cross of Christ; And *There* they are never wanting: And be sure, ye go not down to the *Philistines*, either to forge or sharpen.

7. Fight not as one that beats the ayr; but as having (indeed) a sturdy adversary to deal with; whom yet you are *sure to Overcome.*

8. Look still on your Captain, to observe what He says and Does, and do likewise: To take-up your Cross, and endure hardship, are necessary accoutrements to a Soldier of Christ.

9. Wait on the Lord to Renew your Strength; who then bestirs Himself most, when your strength is gon; Then He lays hold upon Shield and Buckler, and stands *pf. 35.2.* up for your help.

10. Lastly, (and to Influence all) Mind the Lord of his Covenant

Covenant; even *Then*, when (it may be) your self think on it with trouble, as doubting your interest in it: Pray Him to remember it for you; and with the same Good-will wherewith He made it: Beseech Him to look-on His Bow in the Cloud, which Himself hath set there, as a sure sign between God and you; That tho' the skies be Red and lowring, The Clouds return after the Rain, and the Billows go-over your head; you shall not be deluged by them: By this it is, that ye are hedged-about, and walled-up to Heaven. Therefore, Stand not like Men in suspense; as unresolved to fall-on; or doubtful how to come-off; But On, On, the day's your Own; The Lord of Hosts pursues them; And let *all the Sons of God shout for joy*.

Infer. VI.

Sixthly, since Believers onely are interested in the Covenant, and that Faith is a Necessary Instrument which the Covenant wil not work without; & without which, you cannot work with it, Nor see your Interest in it; Look-well to your Faith: first, That it be of the right kind; (*viz.* such as Renounces Self, & lives upon Grace;) And then, having found it such, Be sure ye keep it well, and improve it to the utmost. Two uses, especially, are to be made of it; (1) As your *Shield*, to supply the place of all other peeces of your Armour, when broken or loose; as well as to safeguard them, when they are whole and Tite about you. If your helmet be out of the way, and fiery darts come pouring down; Hold up your Faith between your head and them; Faith is the truest quench-coal to the fire of hell. If your Sword be forgot, or laid-aside, or wants an edge, &c. your Shield, if well applyed, will Retort your enemies weapons on his own Pate. (2) Faith is your spiritual Optick, which shews you things of *Greatest Moment*; and *Not Otherwise* Visible: Even Chariots and horfmen of *Fire*, are not discernible without it. If temptations from the World do indanger you; Turn your Faith that way, and through it view and consider, how Shallow and short-liv'd the pleasures of it are; and how Momentany your sufferings. Then look-at the World to come; The Glory of it, and your interest in it; And how much your Crown will be Brightened by

by the scowrings you have pass'd-under here; and dwell on the contemplation of it. Bend not your eye so much on the peril or length of your passage, as on the long'd-for shore that lies beyond it; And reckon the Surges of that dreadful gulph (which is yet betwixt you and It) but as so many strokes to waft you Thither. This was the course that *Moses* took, and Christ Himself: Nothing so blunts the edge of Satan's temptations, or the World's, as this Faith of God's Elect.

Heb. 11. 26.
chap. 12. 2.

Therefore, see that you hold-fast your Faith; Keep it as your life; (keep That, and it will keep you;) and let it not go until ye die. Then (indeed) it will leave you, because then it will have done you all the service it can; even the whole of what it was ordained-for. But, shall I say, That Faith will then be dissolv'd and go-to-nothing? I would rather express it as the Apostle doth the state of the saints, that shall be found alive at Christ's coming, [*They shall not die, but they shall be changed.*] Faith shall Then be turned into Sight, and we shall have the Real presence, Full possession, and Perfect immixed fruition, of that Blessedness we have believed and hoped-for.

1 Thes. 4. 17.

7. Gather hence, both the *Reason* and *Rationality* of the Saints desires to be dissolv'd: They *knew*, that when this Earthly Tabernacle went-down, they had a better, and more capacious building in Heaven. They also found, That spirits, while dwelling in Flesh, are too-much freightned and infirm, either to *bear* the Glory they were made-for, or to express an answerable thankfulness for it: And for this they groined; Not to be unclothed, (as weary of their present state) but to be Clothed-upon with their House from Heaven. They were *NOW* the sons of God; but what they *should be*, (and fain would be-at) did not appear to them; Nor could, till the vail were Rent, which hung (as yet) twixt them and the *Holy of Holies*. The first-fruits of the Spirit, (which were both an *Earnest* and *Foretast* of future Glory) inspired them with fervent desires of liberty; that glorious liberty which belong'd to them, as being the Sons of God. They had, by faith, laid-hold on Eternal life; This they had

Phil. 1. 23.

2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

1 Joh. 3. 2.

Rom. 8. 23.

2 Cor. 1. 22.

Eph. 1. 14.

Rom. 8. 21.

Phil. 3. 14.

Rom. 5.

Cant. 5. 4.

Coll. 3. 4.

Psal. 73. 25.

Psal. 42. 2.

Math. 11. 12.

2 Cor. 5. 5.

Infer. VIII.

2 Pet. 3. 12.

still in their eye, and earnestly pursued; And so *intent* they were upon it, that they even *forgot* what was behind, (tho' very Memorable in its time.) The *Much* they had attain'd, they counted for *Nothing*, to what was coming; Nor reckon'd for any Cost, to gain that inestimable Pearl, *viz. The prize of the high Calling of God in Christ*. This (they knew) was a thing too big for Mortal senses, tho' as highly Refin'd and sublimated, as capable of whiles Mortal: and therefore long'd for that day, when Immortality should be their clothing. The love of God shed-abroad in their hearts, had given such a Divine Tincture, and so Transform'd and Wid'ned their souls; as nothing could satisfy, but that Immense Deep from whence it came. They knew, That *when Christ their life should appear*, they should *see Him as He is*; Not under shadows, as of old; Nor in a state of humiliation, as when upon earth; nor, as since, under Memorials and Representations; but in His state of glory: The sight of which, would make them like himself; & till *Then*, they could not say, *It is enough*. They knew, that the very Quintessence of Heavenly beatitude, consists in the vision of God; and that Heaven itself, with all that Innumerable company of Angels, and spirits of just Men made perfect, (tho' a very glorious and desirable society) would not satisfy Heaven-born Souls; if their Lord Himself were not there in His Glory. Hence those holy exclamations and out-cries, *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee!* and *When shall I come and appear before God!* Good Jacob would go and see *his* Beloved *afore* he died; and These would *die*, to go and see *Theirs*. This is the *second* time, that the Kingdom of Heaven *suffers violence* from the heirs of Salvation; They know it is *theirs*; and that they were wrought for that self same thing; and being theirs they might lawfully take it by force.

8. (And for a close of all) ye have seen what *Paul* and others did; Go you, and do likewise; Hasten to the day of God; and wait for it as they that watch for the Morning: 1. *Affectionately*, as a thing greatly desirable, especially after a dark and toilsom night: 2. *Patiently* and with *quietness*; Not precipitating, but as knowing *it will come*, and that in the

the dueſt ſeaſon : 3. *Attentively*, as not willing to looſe the ſmalleſt ſound of your Maſter's feet : 4. With *Diligence* alſo and *Preparedneſs* ; that neither *Oyl* nor *Lighting* may be to-ſeek when the *Cry* is made. Be always *Ready*, and *Then* Grone: Grone(I ſay) for that day of Glory, when life and Immortality ſhall be brought to light in Perfection : When your ſelf, with all the Elect of God, meeting in that Great and General *Assembly*, the *Church of the firſt-born* Heb.12.23. *which are written in Heaven* ; may be intirely, vniverſally, and everlaſtingly taken-up in admiring *Electing love*, which ſo gloriously and happily ſhall have wrought all our works for us ; and brought us to the ultimate End it deſigned us for ; which was, To be ever, with the Lord ; To ſee Him as He is ; and to experiment the ſum of that great Petition, in the 17. *Joh*n:---*That they may be One in us.* Joh.17.21.

And in your way thither, Carry this aſſurance ſtill afore you ; That the ſame hands which laid the *Foundation*, will alſo lay the *Top-ſtone*, and that with *ſhoutings* ; And you ſhall liſt-up to Eternity, that loud and joyfull acclamation, Zach.4.7.9. *Grace, Grace, unto it ! Happy art thou, O Iſrael! who is like* Deut. 33.29. *unto thee O People ſaved by the Lord, the ſhield of thine help, and the ſword of thine Excellency ! All thine enemies ſhall* 2 Sam. 22.1 7- *be found lyars unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their high places !* And (which is more than Angels and Men can utter beſides) *GOD ſhall be all in All !* (To proclaim which, was 1 Cor.15.28. the End of this work.) *Amen.*

FINIS.
